The Dissertation Committee for Kehinde Ibukunoluwa Olowoyeye Certifies that this is the approved version of the following Dissertation:

HIGH SCHOOL LEADERS' SENSEMAKING, ACTIONS, AND PRACTICES IN REDUCING THE OVERREPRESENTATION OF STUDENTS OF COLOR IN DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Committee:

_____
Terrance Green, Supervisor

_____
Martha Ovando, Co-Supervisor

_____
Joshua Childs

_____
Jennifer Holme

_____
Trinidad San Miguel

HIGH SCHOOL LEADERS' SENSEMAKING, ACTIONS, AND PRACTICES IN REDUCING THE OVERREPRESENTATION OF STUDENTS OF COLOR IN DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

by

Kehinde Ibukunoluwa Olowoyeye

Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

December, 2018

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to the loving memories of my late father and mother, Emmanuel Oyedeji Fayemiwo and Victoria Mosun Fayemiwo, for their passion of education and their words that have kept me steadfast throughout my academic journey. One of the many words they left me and my siblings with is “If you think education is expensive, try ignorance,”

Acknowledgements

I want to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to my committee chair and co-chair, Drs. Green and Ovando, for their patience, support, and unwavering encouragement to complete my academic journey. I thank both of you for the contribution of your expertise on the topic and thoughtful feedback. I am grateful for your time, energy, insight, and honesty. Without both your guidance and persistent help this dissertation would not have been possible.

I want to thank my committee members, Drs. Childs, Holmes, and San Miguel for your contributions and support. Your experiences, critical feedback, and insights have proved valuable to my study and the completion of my dissertation.

I want to acknowledge the unnamed principals and assistant principals who participated in this study. Thank you for your time, energy, insight, and honesty. I also thank my friends, Natalie Nichols, Sterling Scott, Denise Thompson, and Laurie Molis for the support and encouragement. Thanks to my University of Texas friends and cohort family, Andrene Castro, Aleks Malinowska, Edagar Torres, Sissi O'Reily, and Trent Sharp for your support.

I want to express my thanks and gratitude to my sister and my brother-in-law, Helen, and Churchill Kayode and my brothers, Taiye, Emmanuel, Samuel, Ife Fayemiwo for all the countless support, inspiration, and prayers. Each time my sister calls to ask about my progress, she would say, "No pressure is pressure. You need to complete the journey and not give up."

To my beautiful, amazing, patient and loving children, I am forever grateful for the steadfast commitment and love you have shown to me as I struggled through this

program and tried to be fully present as a mom. Ruthie and Joshua – You both mean the world to me, and I love you.

Above all, I give thanks to the Lord for providing me the strength and endurance to complete this journey.

Abstract

HIGH SCHOOL LEADERS' SENSEMAKING, ACTIONS, AND PRACTICES IN REDUCING THE OVERREPRESENTATION OF STUDENTS OF COLOR IN DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Kehinde Ibukunoluwa Olowoyeye, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2018

Supervisor: Terrance Green, Co-Supervisor: Martha Ovando

Scholarships about public schools' exclusionary disciplinary practices consistently reveal the disproportionate representation of students of color amongst those suspended, expelled or removed to disciplinary alternative education programs (DAEPs) when compared to their White peers. Few studies have examined how school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEPs to disrupt the racial discipline gaps. The purpose of this study is to examine how high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal and implement discipline practices to reduce the disproportionate representation of students of color in DAEP. A qualitative approach was employed through a phenomenological study to examine the phenomenon of school leaders' sensemaking of discretionary discipline and their actions. Specifically, the study draws on interviews, observation notes and document analysis. The findings of the study indicated the relational leadership orientation of the leaders influenced their non-punitive discipline approach,

their challenges attempting to coach culturally incompetent teachers, and the structures and systems the leaders put in place in an effort to disrupt the racial discipline gap. This study concludes with implications for research and practice.

Keywords: discretionary removal; disproportionate; disrupt; non-punitive; overrepresentation; racial discipline gaps; sensemaking

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter One

Introduction

The overrepresentation of African-American and Latino/a students in suspensions, expulsions, and removals to Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEP) is inequitable compared to their White peers (DeMatthews, 2016a, 2016b; Hoffman, 2014; Lippa, 2016; Pane, Rocco, Miller, & Salmon, 2014; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). Studies on the discipline practices implemented in public schools continue to emphasize the disparity in disciplinary actions and consequences assigned to African-American and Latino/a students (Children's Defense Fund (CDF), 1975; DeMatthews, 2016a; Fenning & Rose, 2007; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Lippa, 2016; McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). Researchers have reported that there is no empirical evidence to support the notion that students of color exhibit misbehavior at higher rates when compared to their White peers to justify their disproportionate representation in suspensions, expulsions, and removal to the DAEP (Kelly, 2010; Losen & Skiba, 2010; Nicholson-Crotty, Birchmeier, & Valentine, 2009). However, students of color are more likely to get disciplined for less serious "discretionary" offenses, such as, disrespect to staff or classroom disruption (Losen, & Gillespie, 2012; Skiba, Chung, Trachok, Baker, Sheya & Hughes, 2014), and school leaders have the authority to choose to address the behavior utilizing non-punitive approaches or otherwise. Studies on the discretionary removal of students to Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) have also shown a similar disproportionate representation of students of color when compared to their White counterparts as a result of the discretionary decision making of school administrators (Booth et al., 2012; Homer, 2012; Losen, 2011; Marbley, Malott, Flaherty, & Frederick, 2011; Metze, 2012; Pitsch, 2016; Reyes, 2006). School leaders play a significant role

in the decision making process on the consequences assigned to a student for any behavior perceived to violate the student code of conduct.

Administrators, especially assistant principals, are charged with the responsibility of analyzing, investigating, and making decisions on the discipline referrals they receive from teachers. The discretionary removal of a student to the DAEP usually originates from the teachers based on their perception and interpretation of the student's behavior characterized as inappropriate. The perceived misconduct may be addressed by the classroom teacher without a write-up to report the incident or could result in an office referral that documents the student's offensive behavior perceived to violate the district's student code of conduct. Various factors, such as their beliefs, attitudes, race, culture, background, and sensemaking influence the decision-making of school leaders (Evans, 2007b; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Lippa, 2016; Skiba, Edl, & Rausch, 2007). Administrators investigate the incident reported by teachers on the referral by discussing the occurrence with the students and other witnesses if necessary before they make discretionary decisions. Given school leaders' power to make such pivotal decisions, there is a need to focus on how school leaders make sense of and implement discretionary discipline since they can determine whethere a student is removed and sent to the DAEP.

To this end, this chapter includes brief historical background on school discipline practices, the context that describes school leaders' perspectives on discretionary discipline, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, including the research questions that guided the study. Also discussed are a brief overview of the methodology that was used to conduct the research, including the theoretical framework, and the definition of the terms used relative to this study.

Background

Over 40 years of research on exclusionary discipline practices and actions in public schools have consistently indicated that students of color have been represented disproportionately among those suspended, expelled, or removed to alternative education programs in relation to their white peers (Children's Defense Fund, 1975; Fenning & Rose, 2007; McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). Research has shown that school punitive discipline practices, along with the stereotypic notions held by school leaders regarding the behaviors of students of color, contributed to their disproportionate representation amongst those disciplined in the nation (CDF, 1975; DeMatthews, 2016a; Fenning & Rose, 2007; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002).

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) (1975) was one of the first reported disproportionality in school discipline practices in the mid 1970s. The report contained two significant findings, one of which pointed to suspensions in public schools nationwide during the 1972-73 academic school year that led to the suspension of over one-million students (CDF, 1975). The second finding of the CDF report, gathered from the national dataset of the United States Office of Civil Rights, consisted of over 2000 school districts. It indicated that one in every eight African-American students was suspended at least once in comparison to one in every 16 white students (CDF, 1975). The CDF findings prompted national awareness about disproportionate discipline practices. Further, it launched the appropriate platform through which researchers could also study race-based disproportionate school discipline practices. Some researchers have suggested that traditional school discipline practices that rely on the

removal of students from the classroom environment is fraught with problems and may even exacerbate student behavioral issues (Skiba & Rauch, 2006).

Specifically, Texas, like other states in the U.S., established DAEPs in public school districts in 1995 after the enactment of the zero-tolerance policy, which originated from the Gun-Free School Act passed by the federal government in 1994 (Cortez & Robledo Montecel, 1999). DAEPs are substitutes to the regular classroom and provide a learning environment for students who have violated the student code of conduct, or who have committed certain criminal offenses specified in Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) (http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.37.htm#37.001). School leaders either remove a student to the DAEP mandatorily due to offenses, such as drugs and alcohol, that warrants the removal. Or, administrators can remove students discretionally to the DAEP for offenses that are less severe.

School leaders are obligated to respond to behavioral disruptions, and at the same time, they are held accountable for student academic achievement, sustaining positive stakeholder relationships, and meeting state and federal mandates (Garret, 2013). Given this broad range of responsibilities, school leaders' beliefs, attitudes, and experiences could potentially impact the critical discretionary decisions they make to address "perceived" student inappropriate behavior to preserve an orderly learning environment. Their decision ultimately determines the number of disciplinary referrals that result in student suspensions, removal to the DAEP, and expulsion of students. Different factors, such as the administrator's race, culture, background (Gregory, A., Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Skiba, Horner, Chung, Rausch, May, & Tobin, 2011; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002; Townsend, B. L. (2000), and their experiences on-the-job influence the

way they make sense of student behaviors and the actions they would take to address it based on the decisions made concerning the issue.

The disproportionality in the number of students of color removed to the DAEP compared to their White counterparts perpetuates the school system as a result of the decisions made by school leaders daily. School leaders' world-views can impact the lens through which they view the issue of discipline as it relates to race; which is shaped by their beliefs, attitudes, race, culture, and professional backgrounds and experiences (Gorski, 2013; Green, 2017). These factors, in turn, inform their sensemaking of any discipline occurrence.

Problem Statement

Several studies have focused on school leaders who have made efforts to reform discipline practices thereby disrupting the increasing rates of students of color's discretionary suspension, expulsion, and removal to DAEPs from school (Armour, 2016; Losen, 2010; Green, 2009; Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Vincent, Tobin, Hawken, & Frank, 2012). Majority of the school leaders utilized different discipline intervention strategies, such as school-wide discipline intervention, restorative discipline, and positive behavioral interventions and support (Armour, 2016; Losen, 2010; Green, 2009; Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Vincent, Tobin, Hawken, & Frank, 2012). Researchers have also explored the discretionary disciplinary decisions made by school leaders and how they have contributed to the nation's racial discipline gap (Bireda, 2002; Dupper, Theriot, & Craun, 2009; Hirschfield & Celinska, 2011; Losen, 2013; Morrison, Anthony, Storino, Cheng, Furlong, & Morrison, 2001; Morton, 2013; Skiba et al., 2014). Recent studies on office discipline referrals have focused on conditions under which racial bias could likely influence school leaders' discretionary decisions on discipline (McIntosh et al., 2014; Smolkowski, Girvan,

McIntosh, Nese, & Horner, 2016). Other studies have examined the sensemaking of school leaders around race and demographic changes (Evans, 2007b), including racial discipline gaps created by the discretionary decisions of school leaders identified as social justice leaders (Lippa, 2016), and school leaders' perceptions on discretionary discipline (Pitsch, 2016).

The increasing demands on school administrators to improve student achievement and at the same time maintain a safe learning environment requires that they make equitable decisions thereby provide equal educational opportunities for all students. The sensemaking that school leaders engage in, regarding discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEPs is crucial to the disruption of the persistent disproportionate racial representation amongst those removed to the DAEPs. However, a dearth of research has examined how school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEPs that result in disproportionality (Lippa, 2016; Pitsch, 2016) and the disruption in the continued racial discipline gap or overrepresentation of students of color. Understanding this is critically important because how principals make sense of discretionary discipline and the actions employed in high schools that contribute to reducing the overrepresentation of students of color in DAEPs can help disrupt the overrepresentation of students of color in these programs. This exploration of the leaders' sensemaking of discretionary discipline might also provide information on the different structures and systems that are put in place by these leaders to in an attempt to reduce the disproportionality in the representation of students of color removed to the DAEP.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine how high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEPs and the actions they employed to reduce

the overrepresentation of students of color. To achieve this purpose, this study addresses the following questions:

1. How do high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?
2. How do high school leaders' sense-making inform their actions regarding the discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?
3. What do high school leaders do to prevent the disproportionate representation of students of color amongst those removed discretionally to the DAEP?

Brief Overview of Theoretical Framework and Methodology

To theoretially frame this study, I draw on sensemaking theory (Weick, 1995). I specifically used the seven essential tenets of sensemaking to analyze this study, which are identity construction, retrospect, cues, plausibility, enactment, social contact, and ongoing events. Methodologically, I utilized a qualitative approach to gather information from participants by conducting a phenomenological study design. A phenomenological study focuses on the subjective experiences of individuals and how they make meaning of the experience (Wertz, 2005). The information gathered from the school leaders enabled me to determine "the meaning, structure, and the essence of their lived experiences of the discipline practices phenomenon" (Patton, 2002, p. 104). The phenomenological study provides information on participants' experiences and understanding of the phenomenon within the context of the study. Also, the information helped me identify the contextual factors related to the phenomenon investigated and how participants interpreted these experiences (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Patton, 2002; Wertz, 2005). This phenomenological study consisted of two sessions of semi-structured individual interviews with the high school administrators.

Study Sites, Participants, and Data Sources

The study included two high schools, Rover and Spark High Schools (pseudonym), located in a suburban school district in Texas. Using purposive sampling (Creswell, 2014), I examined these two high schools because five-year longitudinal discipline data which indicated some reduction in the discretionary removal rates of students of color to the DAEP (See Appendix C).

Additionally, four administrators, comprised of two principals and two assistant principals, one of each from both campuses of study participated in this research. Participants in this study met the following criteria: (a) they were a principal or assistant principal (i.e., school leader), and (b) they have worked in the school for at least three of the five years of the discipline data collected. Pseudonyms were used to maintain the anonymity of all participants and study sites. Data gathered contained no identifying information that could associate their participation in the study. Finally, the sources of data for this research comprised contextual district and campus-level demographic and disciplinary data related to disproportionate discretionary DAEP removal of students and the participants' responses to the in-depth semi-structured interviews.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined to provide clarity in the meanings of words used in this study. The articulation of the researcher's selection of definition would help guide the readers as they make sense of the ideas since multiple definitions exist to explain concepts.

1. Chapter 37 Discipline – A student code of conduct mandated by state and local/district discipline policies, rules, regulations, and procedures to remove disruptive students or students unable to function in their home campuses to an alternative education setting.

2. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) – An alternative education program designed to meet the needs of students who act out with disruptive and violent behavior on the school campus. DAEPs can be held on- or off-campus and are required to incorporate approved instructional curriculum in English language arts, mathematics, science, history, and self-discipline, and provide counseling services. They are mandated to comply with the Four Public Academic Goals to ensure students succeed by demonstrating exemplary performance in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies (TEC, 37.008).
3. Discretionary Disciplinary Removal – Disciplinary action left to the discretion of school/district administrators and categorized as discretionary according to the school district's student code of conduct (TEC, 37.001). Although school districts are required to develop their categories of mandatory infractions, state policy may classify certain offenses as discretionary (TEC, 37.001). Students may, therefore, be removed from their home campuses and placed in a DAEP if one or more of the following felonies is committed (Chapter 37.006 a):
    a. The superintendent or designee has reasonable belief that the student has engaged in conduct defined as a felony offense apart from those specified in Title 5 of the Penal Code.
    b. The continued presence of the student in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students or teachers and is detrimental to the educational learning process (TEC Annotate, 37.007).
4. Expulsion – The most severe student disciplinary action used when a student cannot be suspended or removed and placed in a DAEP. Students expelled are denied education at

their home campus for a period. The students get assigned to a JJAEP, based on the severity of their offense.

5. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) – A law requiring all schools to protect the confidentiality of a student's educational records; sometimes perceived as an obstacle to information sharing between child welfare and education agencies.
6. Gun-Free School Act (GFSA) – A law enacted in 1994 that requires each state receiving federal funding to have a state law in effect requiring local educational agencies to expel any student determined to have brought a weapon to school. Expulsion may be up to one year and is mandatory except when a chief administering officer of the agency modifies the decision on a case-by-case basis. Each state has enacted laws of their own, now known as zero tolerance laws.
7. Mandatory Disciplinary Removal – Inappropriate behaviors categorized as requiring the mandatory removal of a student from their home campus. Examples of such inappropriate behaviors include: committing a felony or misdemeanor; committing an assault or making a terrorist threat; using, selling, providing, or possessing drugs; using, selling, providing or possessing alcohol, glue, or aerosol chemicals; public lewdness or indecent exposure; or committing a retaliatory offense against any school employee (Texas Education Code Annotated, 37.006). Mandatory removal of a student must take place when the student receives deferred prosecution for a felony; when the court or jury finds that a student was engaged in a felony; or when the superintendent reasonably believes that a student has committed murder, manslaughter, or criminally negligent homicide (TEC 37.006).

8. Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) – The collection of data by TEA regarding all aspects of public education, including school personnel, financial status, and organizational information, as well as student demographics and academic performance.
9. Racial Discipline Disproportionality or Overrepresentation – Occurs when students of color get suspended or expelled at a higher frequency, 10% or more than the percentage their race represents within the school population.
10. Referral – Disciplinary documentation or a written report by a campus stakeholder describing the infraction committed in violation of school policy, and recommendations made by the campus administrator for removal of the student from the home campus to a DAEP.
11. Student Code of Conduct – A set of rules outlining student responsibilities and expectations. Also described in the document are the schools' responsibilities and proper practices for a school and district.
12. Zero Tolerance "Law and Order" – A public school discipline policy that applies automatic, prescribed, mandatory sanctions on student discipline infractions with little or no consideration for conditions, circumstances, intent, or understanding of the individual committing the offense.

Limitations

This study only examined high school leaders' sensemaking on discretionary DAEP removal and how they implemented discipline practices to reduce the racial discipline gaps since the disproportionate discretionary exclusionary discipline practices towards students of color result in several long-term adverse effects that are more prominent in high schools. Examples of

these negative outcomes are low academic achievement; increased student dropout rates (Skiba & Sprague, 2008; Triplett, Allen, & Lewis, 2014), disengagement from the educational setting (Skiba et al., 2011), and the school to prison pipeline (Heitzeg, 2009; Townsend Walker, 2012). Therefore, consumers of this research study would decide on the connections of the findings to elementary and middle school leaders within a similar context. The goal of this research was to produce rich findings to understand the nuances of this work that could inform the work of leaders at other campuses. As a result, this study includes a smaller sample size.

The disciplinary data provided by the district on "Rover and Spark" high schools involved in this study did not contain student gender. Therefore, this study did not include data on the rates of discretionary removals to the DAEP based on student gender. It is an expectation that data collection and analyses will be time-consuming and the researcher's personal biases could easily influence the results (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Therefore, I was mindful of my own biases as I collected and analyzed the data.

Delimitations

The research focused solely on the sensemaking, actions, and practices used to reduce the overrepresentation of students of color in DAEPs. This study only included four school leaders, two principals, and two assistant principals at the high school level. This study did not include the perspectives of secondary and elementary teachers, elementary and middle school administrators' and other school disciplinarians. This research did not include parents or students since they do not make decisions on disciplinary actions that are appropriate for any form of misbehavior; therefore, no parents or students participated in the study.

Assumptions

Since this study addressed how high school leaders made sense of discretionary removal to the DAEP and how they implemented their campus discipline practices to reduce disproportionality in racial representation at the DAEP, my assumption is that the participants have the authority to remove students discretionally to the DAEP and are familiar with discipline practices used on their campuses. I also believed the participants gave honest responses no matter how difficult.

Another assumption was that the selected schools used discipline practices that contributed to a decrease in the percentages of students of color removed to the DAEP. Although the reduction in the number was evident across all student races, African-American and Hispanic students were represented at higher rates when compared with their White peers. Also, the reductions in the number of students were not significant enough to disrupt the disproportionality and sustain it (See Appendix C). Therefore, I assume the school leaders would continue to make conscious efforts to disrupt the discipline gaps.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will add to the body of literature regarding the actions school leaders perform to reduce the overrepresentation of students of color amongst those removed discretionary to the DAEP. As expressed by Townsend (2000), school leaders should use suspension and expulsion data to address the differential use of exclusionary discipline with students of color to ensure equity in the context of ethnicity, gender, ability, socioeconomic status, or an intersection of any of these variables.

The findings will inform school leaders and districts on how the process of the sensemaking of the state, district, and campus discipline practices regarding discretionary DAEP

removal could potentially contribute to or disrupt the discipline gap. The results of this study will also have implications for the training of school leaders.

Several school districts are making efforts to address the issue of race through the creation of different committees that focus on race-based issues, such as the Equity Task Force. These districts also provide professional development opportunities and workshops on race-related topics including culturally responsive teaching. However, the is a need to explore at a deeper level the concept of how the school leaders make sense of the learning and information gathered from the training and how they process them to take the desired actions in reducing discipline gaps.

Therefore, the findings of this study will inform school leaders and districts on how to make available targeted professional developments to their teachers and campus leaders. It will also inform them on how individual school leader's reflection and understanding of their worldview and the lens through which they make sense of the issue of discipline around race impact the decisions they make on a daily basis.

The findings will inform campus leaders on the types of systems and structures that they need to establish on their campuses according to the context of their school to initiate the reduction process in the discipline gaps. Also, the findings will inform school districts on the different ways they can provide support to the campus leaders, aside from the professional development opportunities, including how the progress made by the school leaders can be monitored with fidelity to sustain the system. Furthermore, the research may also inform policy development and enactment regarding discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP.

Chapter Summary

This chapter briefly described the context of this study that includes background information on DAEP removals, brief explanations of the problem statement and the purpose of the study. Also discussed was a brief overview of methodology that consisted of the qualitative approach, an outline of the research questions used, and the theoretical lenses through which I analyzed the qualitative data collected from this study. Similarly addressed were the limitations, delimitations, assumptions, and significance of the research. In chapter two, I will discuss the reviewed literature and conceptual framework that I used for this study.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

This study examined how four school leaders in two high schools made sense of discretionary removal and what they did to make progress in reducing the disproportionate rates at which African-American and Latino/a students were removed to the disciplinary alternative education programs (DAEPs) when compared to their White peers. This chapter presents the body of literature on the punitive school disciplinary practices that have perpetuated the racial discipline gaps and the roles of school leaders as it relates to how they implemented different discipline practices and make discretionary decisions regarding student behaviors perceived as inappropriate. Specific attention was on the discretionary removal of students of color to DAEPs.

In this chapter, I reviewed four strands of literature. The first strand examines the literature on disproportionate racial discipline gaps inherent in the punitive discipline practices used in U.S. public schools, including literature on the Texas public schools' disciplinary data that are parallel to the national data. The third strand of literature examines national discipline reform efforts through the enactment of zero-tolerance policies and the establishment of DAEPs to reduce perceived widespread school violence. In addition, I reviewed literature on different discipline reform efforts, besides the national reforms implemented by schools. The fourth strand of literature reviewed focused on school leaders' roles in discretionary discipline and its implementation.

The four strands present previous studies conducted to examine the disproportionate discipline practices in public schools, as well as the mandates placed on school leaders to

improve student achievement and at the same time maintain a safe learning environment by implementing different discipline reforms.

In reviewing literature for this study, I analyzed peer-reviewed journal articles, empirical studies on disproportionate public school discipline practices, school leaders' roles in implementing the punitive discipline policies, and students' removal to the DAEPs using different conceptual frameworks, including the Sensemaking theoretical framework. I reviewed policy briefs and dissertations published within the last eight years to show the alignment between most recent studies and the historical trends in the racial discipline gaps. I utilized four search engines through the University of Texas at Austin Library website: JSTOR, EBSCO, Educational Administration Abstract, and ERIC. Also, I used the Google Scholar Database. The first search terms - "disproportionate discipline of African American and Latino/a students" generated over 40,000 literature. I narrowed the search by selecting literature published within 2007-2017, which produced over 10,537 literature. I selected scholarly, and peer-review articles and the search produced about 1,059 literature. Of the 10,537 initially generated, 2,059 were dissertations, of which 221 related to the education field. I also explored the term "Discretionary Discipline Alternative Education Program." The search generated 26 dissertations through the University of Texas at Austin Library website and over 50,000 literature produced on the Google Scholar. I selected the most relevant and reviewed other related articles including journals that cited them. This process enabled me to study research that showed the trends in discipline practices and the roles of school leaders discretionary decisions concerning behaviors perceived as inappropriate that relates to students of color. I reviewed scholarships from the 1970s to date to better understand previous studies on the historical patterns in the national disproportionate discipline data.

Specifically, I reviewed articles, policy briefs, and book excerpts. I also reviewed the Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 37 and Texas Education Agency information on discipline. Likewise, I reviewed two recently published dissertations: Lippa (2016) – sensemaking of aspiring leaders that identified themselves as social justice leaders; and Saltrick (2010) focused on how school leaders make sense of accountability to help teachers develop their instructional practices. The tables below (Table 2.1 – 2.4) show the types and number of literatures reviewed for each of the four strands.

Table 2.1: Strand 1 - Literature Reviewed on Disproportionate Racial Discipline Gaps

	Late 1900s	2000 - 2005	2006 - 2009	2010 – 2018
Articles	3	11	1	7
Policy Briefs	4	4	4	2
Book Excerpts	-	1	2	-
Dissertation	-	-	-	1
TEA	-	-	-	-
TEC	-	-	-	-

Table 2.2: Strand 2 – Literature Reviewed on Texas DAEP and Racial Discipline Gaps

	Late 1900s	2000 - 2005	2006 - 2009	2010 - 2018
Articles	3	5	4	6
Policy Briefs	2	2	5	2
Book Excerpts	-	1	1	-
Dissertation	-	-	-	-
TEA	-	-	-	Retrieved 2016
TEC	-	-	-	Retrieved 2016

Table 2.3: Strand 3 - Literature Reviewed on National and Texas Discipline Reform Efforts

	Late 1900s	2000 - 2005	2006 – 2009	2010 - 2018
Articles	-	1	1	5
Policy Briefs	-	1	-	3
Book Excerpts	-	-	-	-
Dissertation	-	-	-	2
TEA	-	-	-	-
TEC	-	-	-	-

Table 2.4: Strand 4 - Literature Reviewed on School Leaders' Roles in Discretionary Discipline

	Late 1900s	2000 - 2005	2006 – 2009	2010 - 2018

Articles	-	5	-	5
Policy Briefs	-	1	-	2
Book Excerpts	-	-	1	1
Dissertation	-	-	-	2
TEA	-	-	-	-
TEC	-	-	-	-

The first strand of literature reviewed for Research on Disproportionate Racial Discipline Gaps, is composed of two subsections: zero tolerance and school safety concern; as well as exclusionary discipline. Table 2.1 above shows the number of articles, policy briefs, book excerpts reviewed for this strand. Likewise, I reviewed a Dissertation written by Lippa in 2016.

Historical Trends in National Racial Discipline Gaps

Scholarships have shown that students of color get assigned a differential school disciplinary consequences that range from office disciplinary referrals to suspension, removal to the DAEP, and expulsion. The variation in the disciplinary actions taken by school leaders results in the overrepresentation of students of color when matched to their White peers (Fenning & Rose, 2007; DeMatthews, Carey, Olivarez, & Moussavi Saeedi, 2017). Disproportionate student discipline was defined by Harry and Anderson (1995) as the expectation that African-American students would get suspended or expelled at a higher frequency, 10% or more, than the percentage their race represents within the school population.

Presumably, the intent of implementing school discipline policies is to maintain order and safety by removing students who violate school rules and disrupt the learning environment. Also, school disciplinary actions are intended or used to set an example of those punished students, to discourage other students from violating the student code of conduct. However, schools tend to rely heavily on exclusionary discipline as the primary discipline strategy which involves the removal of students from the instructional classroom setting (Gregory, Skiba, &

Noguera, 2010). Unfortunately, this practice every so often has a disproportionate effect on African-American and Latino/a students. Discipline practices in the nation's public schools are punitive (Tyack, 1974, Skiba et al., 2002) and are influenced by the zero-tolerance policies discussed in the subsection below.

Zero Tolerance and School Safety Concerns

Zero-tolerance policies evolved as a result of the Gun-Free Schools Act (GFSA), which was passed by Congress in 1994 to combat widespread perceived school violence. The GFSA policies were administrative rules to address specific problems connected to school safety and discipline (McAndrews, 2001). School districts in different states were compelled to implement zero-tolerance policies and establish disciplinary alternative school models to provide and maintain safe, conducive learning environments, to eliminate school violence and increase student achievement on test scores (Gregg, 1998). Regardless of the different arguments that school violence has considerably reduced, the media was focused intensely on school violence until the 1990s when legislators were forced to combat weapons in schools with the passage of zero-tolerance policies (McAndrews, 2001). The impact of the perceived heightened school disruption and violence across the nation on student academic achievement, since the mid-1960s, necessitated the need for stricter discipline policies; it prompted the government to enact zero-tolerance policy in 1994 as a means to counter the perceived student violence. The policy did not specify how school leaders should address inappropriate student behaviors in contrast to mandatory offenses and they, therefore, default to make subjective discretionary decisions. Research suggests that the discretionary decisions made by school leaders contributed to the racial discipline gap (Bireda, 2002; Dupper, Theriot, & Craun, 2009; Hirschfield & Celinska,

2011; Losen, 2013; Morrison, Anthony, Storino, Cheng, Furlong, & Morrison, 2001; Morton, 2013; Skiba et al., 2014).

The hugely publicized school shootings during the 1990s spawned significant public concern and promoted a prevalent impression about safety concerns for students in schools (Borum, Cornell, Modzeleski, & Jimerson, 2010). However, researchers such as Borum et al. (2010) disrupted these misconceptions. They conducted an empirical study on the trends of school and community violence and provided evidence on best practices that could prevent school shootings. They also stated that schools had responded to shootings by using safety and security measures that lacked sound research support and the use of strategies commonly criticized as unsound practices, such as zero-tolerance discipline and student profiling (Borum et al., 2010). Examples of the unrealistic school safety measures cited included the recommendation to arm teachers with guns after the killings of five girls in 2006 by a gunman who invaded a one-room Pennsylvania Amish school (Associated Press, 2006b). Also considered was the provision of Kevlar-coated textbooks to students to use as bullet shields (Associated Press, 2006a). Another example of the safety measures employed by schools was the hiring of a former military officer in a Texas school division to train students on how to collectively attack and subdue a gunman ("Burleson Changes Stance," 2006). The implementation of new security and prevention-oriented initiatives, particularly the zero-tolerance discipline practices, outpaced evidence of their effectiveness (Brooks, Schiraldi, & Ziedenberg, 2000).

The extensive publicity of school shooting incidents heightened people's perceptions of danger (Cornell, 2006). A Gallup poll conducted after the Columbine shooting indicated that two-thirds of Americans responded stating that similar episode was "very likely" or "somewhat

likely" to occur in their community (Saad, 1999). The poll also showed that more than one-third of high school students knew students in their school who were "potentially violent enough to repeat the incident that occurred at Columbine High School" (Gallup, 1999). Another poll conducted a year after the Columbine shooting (Nagy & Danitz, 2000) found that 71% of parents had changed their view on their children's safety at school. About 40% of parents regarded their children as "very safe" at school, and only 50% considered their children "somewhat safe." Paradoxically, the report also showed that in the same year the Columbine shooting occurred, 17 students got killed in the nation's schools in contrast to the more than 2,500 young people (ages 5–19) murdered outside of school and the more than 9,700 young people killed in accidents (Anderson, 2001). The fear of school shootings was greatly exaggerated in comparison with other risks, such as riding in a car (Borum et al., 2010).

Nevertheless, all states were mandated to develop and enact zero tolerance laws in schools so as not to forfeit their federal funding (Martin, 2000). The attachment of federal funds to such mandates left the majority of states and school districts no choice but to enact and implement the policies. Ashford (2000) reported that funds disbursed by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) were contingent on a state's enactment of the policies to produce gun-free schools. Several states, counties, and school districts developed their policies within the guidelines of GFSA that addressed unique problems specific to their local needs (McAndrews, 2001). Some researchers examined different parts of the zero-tolerance policies that were adopted and enacted by various schools, based on their unique needs (Kaufman, Chen, Choy, Ruddy, Miller, Fleury, Chandler, Rand, Klaus, & Planty, 2000; Skiba & Peterson, 1999).

The majority of schools in the United States approved the enactment of different parts of the policy and implemented them by the time the National Center for Education Statistics

published their 2000 report, “Indicators of School Crime Safety” (Kaufman et al., 2000). Based on national data, 94% of schools implemented the firearms policy, while 90% applied the policy on weapons other than firearms. Additionally, 87% of schools implemented the zero-tolerance policies against alcohol, and 79% implemented policies against violence and tobacco (Kaufman et al., 2000). Some administrators, on the other hand, declined to apply the policy in this manner, given the fact that GFSA provided some flexibility in the wordings of the policy, which permitted schools to review infractions on a case-by-case basis (Skiba and Peterson, 1999). These administrators perceived this provision as a means to deal with disruptive students, thereby sending a message to potential violators (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Also, school leaders targeted both severe and mild behaviors when disciplining students, to serve as a deterrent and send a strong message to potential troublemakers that such actions were unacceptable (Skiba & Knesting, 2001). The punitive nature of the zero tolerance policy involve the exclusion of students from the classroom, discussed in the subsection below.

Exclusionary Discipline

School leaders assigned stricter consequences to less severe behaviors because the zero-tolerance policy did not state which offenses were serious and which were less severe (McCord, Hager, & Mattocks, 2007). The lack of clarity gave many states an opportunity to broaden their zero-tolerance policy. As a result, they included mandatory suspensions and/or expulsions of students involved in fighting; possession of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco; excessive absences; defiance of authority; and disruptive or disorderly conduct (McCord et al., 2007; Skiba, 2000a). Other researchers, such as Advancement Project (2005), Justice Policy Institute (2009), Skiba and Peterson (2000) stated that zero-tolerance policies for other schools included certain objects

considered harmless outside of the school environment. These objects include cough drops, aspirin, or Midol regarded as drugs by the schools and nail clippers or paper clips as weapons.

The data on the national out-of-school suspension for the 2009-2010 school year investigated by Losen and Gillespie (2012) accounted for the suspension of 3.3 million students. Of those suspended, Black students were more likely to be suspended from school three times than their non-Black peers. African-American students suspended at least once were 17%, which was 1 in every 6 Black students when compared to 1 in 13 or 8 % Native Americans; 1 in 13 or 7% Hispanics; 1 in 20 or 5% Whites; and 1 in 50 or 2% Asian Americans (Losen & Gillespie, 2012). Researchers have challenged the notion that the higher rate of suspension of African-American students was due to their behavior. The argument that student behavior is worse among African-Americans is unsubstantiated and, therefore, lacks an adequate explanation for their overrepresentation in school discipline data (Butler, Lewis, Moore, & Scott, 2012). It is, therefore, necessary to examine if schools apply differential discipline to any group of students as a result of their race, gender, ability, socioeconomic status, or a combination of these variables (Townsend, 2000). Also, there is a need to understand how school leaders make sense of student behaviors as they make disciplinary decisions that relate to students of color.

From the integrated literature review I conducted, the NCES (1998) surveyed a sample of 1,234 school principals that represented the national elementary, middle, and high school levels population to determine how they would rate different student behaviors. The most frequently cited misconducts at all levels were the less violent behaviors, such as tardiness that occurred 40% of the time, absenteeism at 25% occurrence, and physical fights between students, 21%. Conversely, severe misconducts relating more to school safety were cited as "moderate

problems," since they rarely occurred – drug use (9%), gangs (5%), possession of weapons (2%), and physical abuse of teachers (2%).

Likewise, in 2000, the Harvard Civil Rights Project published a report, titled "Opportunities Suspended." The report analyzed the impact of disproportionate zero-tolerance policies on students of color that required strict and severe punitive sanctioning of all offenses, regardless of the severity of the misconduct. Also, approximately 32% of African-American students were suspended that year even though their numbers only accounted for roughly 17% of U.S. public school enrollment (Harvard CRP, 2000). African-American students were often being referred to the principal's office more for subjectively defined offenses when compared to their white peers (Harvard CRP, 2000).

Researchers, such as Skiba and colleagues (2002), conducted empirical studies to explain racial biases and discrimination that contribute to disproportional discipline practices. They used discriminant analyses and found substantial statistical significant differences between the rate of office referrals and race. Other researchers have reported racial disparities in the rates of exclusionary discipline for students of color and noted the differences being most pronounced for African-American students in particular (Losen & Gillespie, 2012; Losen, Hodson, Keith, Morrison, & Belway, 2015).

From the literature review conducted on DAEP, Levin (2006) reported that the stringent implementation of the zero-tolerance policy necessitated the need for disciplinary alternative education programs (DAEPs), where students, impacted by the violation of the policy, could continue their education. DAEPs emerged as sites that would serve both the educational and disciplinary needs of these students (Levin, 2006). The inconsistency in the interpretation of the zero-tolerance policy and the discretionary power of school leaders to make decisions on the

removal of students call for an examination on how they make sense of the behaviors relating to students of color that result in the racial discipline gap and their disproportional representation in the nation's DAEPs. There is, therefore, need to examine the way school leaders make sense of the behaviors of students of color and make decisions that could potentially perpetuate or disrupt the trend in the nation's discipline data.

For the Texas DAEP and racial discipline gaps, the second strand, I reviewed literatures on DAEP establishments in Texas, as well as the disproportionality in the removal of students of color to the DAEPs to comapre it with the trends in the nation's disproportionate DAEP removal of students of color since this study is on school leaders of two high schools in Southwestern U.S.. Also discussed in Strand two is the subsection on disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) that highlights the two conflicting views regarding the advocates of DAEP and those that are against its establishment. Table 2.2 above shows the number of articles, policy briefs, book excerpts reviewed for this strand. Likewise, I retrieved discipline policies and reports from the Texas Education Code (TEC) and Texas Education Agency (TEA).

Texas DAEP and Racial Discipline Gaps

Studies on Texas schools discipline data have indicated that African-American and Latino/a students are represented at disproportionate rates when compared with their White peers. School discipline was described by Cameron (2006) as policies and actions school personnel take to prevent or intervene with unwanted student behaviors (p.219). Disciplinary practices have multiple purposes; they can discourage and restrain or prevent future misconduct and encourage appropriate behavior (Duke, 2002). The locally adopted discipline management plan sometimes referred to as a code of conduct, is the most common form of authority

implemented to ensure student discipline (Kajs, 2006). A blending of federal, state, and local laws which include the local school district policy govern the code of conduct (Kajs, 2006).

For instance, the Texas Education Code (TEC) 37.001 necessitates public schools board members to develop a student code of conduct that stipulates misconduct and comparable consequences (Chapter 37, Texas Education, 2016). The TEC 37 mandates specific penalties for specific wrongdoing, and at the same time, it permits local districts to define consequences for other misconducts within specific parameters. Texas school law, like other states, defined mandatory removal offenses and how school leaders should address these inappropriate student behaviors. However, subjective behaviors that require discretionary decision making were not clearly defined. According to DeMatthews (2016a & 2016b) "the lack of detail on what constitutes persistent misbehavior allows school leaders to suspend students for minor offenses and leaves room for interpretation and bias" (pg. 83). Researchers have expressed concerns that a minimal portion of the overall number of students removed to the DAEPs in Texas schools was due to mandatory offenses. Discretionary offenses accounted for a more substantial part, and students of color represented a disproportionate percentage of all the students removed to the DAEPs when compared to their White peers (Booker & Mitchell, 2001; Levin, 2006; Reyes, 2001).

The nation's 2006-2007 discipline data examined by Dupper and Dingus (2008) indicated that of the 223,190 students disciplined with corporal punishment, 49,197 of those students attended Texas schools. The finding also showed that Texas had the most significant number of children subjected to corporal punishment in the United States and that the schools indicated high preferences to use punitive discipline approaches. Statistical data related to Texas' school-to-prison pipeline research showed that the harsh discipline approach employed in Texas schools

act as a catalyst that eventually exposes a student to the juvenile justice system, especially students of color (Texas Appleseed, 2007 & 2009). Also, the report showed that Texas school districts suspend, expel or refer at-risk students of color to alternative disciplinary schools at disproportionately higher rates compared to the overall population (Booker & Mitchell, 2001; Cole & Heilig, 2011; Texas Appleseed, 2009).

The socioeconomic status of a school community influences the rate the students receive office discipline referrals. Researchers reported that in Texas schools, the likelihood of a student receiving a disciplinary referral depends more on if the student attend poor and minority schools than the nature of the offensive behavior (Cole & Heilig, 2011). Also, Texas public schools removed over 100,000 students from their regular classrooms to DAEPs in 2007-2008 (Cole & Heilig, 2011). School administrators and local districts removed two-thirds of the students on discretionary grounds and not for behavior which mandated their removal by law, and most were students of color (Cole & Heilig, 2011). The subsection below highlights DAEP establishment in Texas including the benefits and downsides of DAEP expressed by different scholars.

Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)

DAEPs were introduced by The Texas Legislature in 1995 through the Safe Schools Act, after the enactment of zero-tolerance policy by the federal government in 1994 (Cortez & Robledo Montecel, 1999) in response to the perceived school violence. Levin (2006) described DAEPs as substitute schools providing alternative classroom settings for students removed from their home schools for violating the student code of conduct. Students removed to DAEPs included those who committed certain criminal offenses as listed in the state's education code, such as those detailed in Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code. The location of DAEPs within school districts varied; some were operated on one of the district's regular school

campuses, while others were self-contained (Levin, 2006) to ensure isolation of a student from peers in the regular school setting. The purpose of DAEPs was to correct or manage the disruptive behavior of students with low academic achievements or those identified as undesirables (Aron, 2006; Thusi, 2011), and, at the same time, meet their educational needs without suspending or expelling them from school (Johnson, 2014). However, due to unclear stipulations in the zero-tolerance policies regarding disciplinary actions by school leaders, students of color are discretionarily removed to DAEPs for minor offenses at a rate higher than their white counterparts (Skiba, 2000b). The vague stipulations in the zero-tolerance policies gave school leaders the latitude to make discretionary disciplinary decisions, which could be subjective (Wertz, 2005) due to the school leaders' sensemaking (Evans, 2007b; Lippa, 2016; Weick, 1995) as they interact with the situation and the student involved. The discretionary decisions have contributed to the disproportionate representation of students of color amongst those removed to the DAEPs.

Advocates of DAEPs have argued that unique characteristics make the program a good fit for students with disruptive behaviors by (a) providing an avenue for the district to create a conducive educational environment similar to the regular school setting (Duke & Griesdorn, 1999), (b) placing a student in an environment with an established culture that is focused on respect and high expectations (Renihan & Renihan, 1995), (c) providing a smaller supportive environment that allows for supplementary attention and counseling to address behavioral reform (Cable, Plucker, & Spradlin, 2009), (d) creating an environment that supports the discipline process yet enables the student to benefit from academic instruction rather than being excluded (Raywid, 1995), (e) holding students accountable for their behaviors by helping them learn

consequences (Raywid, 1995), and (f) providing close supervision and counseling for students requiring such services (Renihan & Renihan, 1995).

In contrast to the viewpoints of supporters of DAEPs, others such as, Cable et al. (2009) and Gregg (1998) have argued that removal of students to DAEPs result in unintended consequences that impact the students assigned to these alternative settings. The Institute for the Study of Students at Risk (2001) stated that the home schools of students regarded as difficult to teach or those that exhibit disruptive behaviors remove them to DAEPs. Hadderman (2002) reaffirmed, schools often use DAEPs as "warehouses" for students considered difficult (p. 6). Researchers that oppose the removal of students from traditional schools suggested that some of the disruptive behaviors exhibited by students may not be due entirely to the student's fault, but instead may be caused partly by the teachers' actions (Cable et al., 2009; and Gregg, 1998).

Some researchers linked students' increased dropout and crime rates to exclusionary and punitive disciplinary measures, such as the removal of students from traditional schools, were related to the increased dropout and crime rates (Leone, Christle, Nelson, Skiba, Frey, & Jolivette, 2003). Similarly, Texas Appleseed (2007) reported that exclusion of students from the general school environment acts as a catalyst that impels students to become involved in the juvenile justice system eventually. Also, students removed to DAEPs are more susceptible to criminal behavior and more likely to become incarcerated (Juszkiewicz, Ferreira, Feldman, Jaffe, & Davis, 2000; Thusi, 2011), thus increasing the possibility of the school-to-prison pipeline phenomenon.

The discretionary removal of students to the DAEP is dependent on the decision of school administrators. They determine if a student's inappropriate behavior violates the district's student code of conduct (TEC, 37.001) and qualifies him/her for discretionary removal. The

state's education agency may recognize some infractions that are categorized as mandatory in the district's student code of conduct handbook as discretionary (TEC, 37.001). However, unclear classification of these offenses could lead to a loose interpretation of policy at the state and district levels. If discipline policy interpretation by district administrators do not align with the way the state categorizes them, then campuses, which assign students discretionary removals, would be significantly impacted. It is essential to consider the possibility that each administrator could interpret infractions differently, which could create a set of complex dynamics in the implementation of policies. Data have suggested that the loose interpretation of discipline policy related to discretionary decision-making negatively impact students of color. According to Booker and Mitchell (2011), the discretionary removal of students to DAEPs contributes to the disproportionate representation of African-American and Latino/a students in most school districts.

The Texas Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data released by Texas Education Agency (TEA), for academic years 2011-2015, confirmed the disproportionate number of students of color removed to DAEPs in comparison to their White peers. The results consistently showed that African-American students had the highest rates of removal, followed by Latino/a students. To determine these percentages from the PEIMS data, I divided the number of discretionary DAEP removals per racial group by the total number of students (in each ethnic group) enrolled in Texas public schools. The rates at which public schools discretionarily removed students to DAEPs by race in the state of Texas, between 2011 and 2015 were 4.2%, 4.1%, 4.0%, 3.7%, and 3.5% respectively for African-American students; and 2.4%, 2.3%, 2.1%, 2.0%, and 1.8% respectively for Latino/a students. In contrast, the rates of removal of White students were 1.5%, 1.5%, 1.3%, 1.3%, and 1.2% respectively (see Tables A3, A4 &

A5 in Appendix A for details). These data validate the arguments that have been put forward by researchers regarding the disproportionate discretionary removal of students of color to DAEPs. Although the data showed reductions over the five-year period, disproportionality still exists amongst the three racial groups' representation.

Some scholars, such as, Armour (2016), Losen (2010) and Sugai and Horner (2002) have examined the different discipline practices reform efforts implemented by schools to disrupt the racial discipline gaps created mainly by discretionary decisions made by school leaders that impact students of color adversely. However, there is a need to understand how school leaders make sense of discretionary discipline related to race and how their sensemaking inform the actions they take. Therefore, this study examines how school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEPs and the disciplinary practices school leaders implement that have the potential in reducing the racial disproportionality in DAEP removals. The third strand of literature reviewed focus on examples of discipline reform efforts employed nationally and those implemented by different school districts to disrupt the racial discipline gaps. The section is comprised of the subsection, school-wide reform efforts and two subsubsections, Restorative Discipline Practices and Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS).

Table 2.3 above shows the types and number of literatures reviewed for strand three, which includes articles, policy briefs, and two dissertations, Lippa (2016) and Saltrick (2010).

National Discipline Practices Reform Efforts

Many schools and districts across the nation have come to realize that punitive exclusionary discipline practices were not yielding the best results, and have alternatively resorted to discipline practices that focus on relationship building. These practices include

school-wide discipline intervention; restorative discipline; and positive behavioral interventions and support (Armour, 2016; Losen, 2010; and Sugai & Horner, 2002). Previous studies suggest that punitive discipline approaches are not effective; they also increase the chances of adverse social and academic outcomes already prevalent among students of color (Armour, 2016; Losen, 2010; Skiba & Losen, 2016; Sugai & Horner, 2002). Education leaders, school districts, states, and federal policymakers have responded by seeking alternative discipline models and practices that foster a productive and healthy instructional climate without depriving a large number of students from learning (Armour, 2016; Losen, 2010; Skiba & Losen, 2016; Sugai & Horner, 2002).

The United States Departments of Education and Justice commenced a national initiative, the Supportive School Discipline Initiative (SSDI), in response to the differences in school discipline that results in increased students' dropout rates and contacts with the juvenile justice system (Skiba & Losen, 2016). The SSDI was intended to reduce the use of suspension and expulsion and to diminish the flow of school-to-prison-pipeline. The initiative included a two-part federal guidance document designed to address the disparities inherent in school discipline practices and it provided guidance on moving toward more efficient alternatives. The legal guidance in the report highlighted the impact of discipline practices disparities and the legal justification that administrators should consider when schools are making decisions to exclude or suspend students. An example cited in the document was the suspension of students for truancy and the potential burden this could have if it affected a particular student race. Such suspension would most likely violate the federal anti-discrimination law, except the school, can show that the decision to suspend was educationally necessary (Duncan, 2010). As a result of the SSDI, school districts' discipline practices were reviewed by the federal government for possible

violations. Some large districts, including Dade County, Florida; Los Angeles and Oakland, California; and Oklahoma City, were subjected to reviews for compliance with Civil Rights law which resulted in substantial changes in their disciplinary practices (Duncan, 2010).

The Center for Civil Rights Remedies' conducted a review between September 2009 and July 2012. The report from the study indicated the level of federal involvement with school discipline (Losen et al., 2015). The authors noted that there were 821 discipline-based complaints and agency-initiated compliance reviews during September 2009 and July 2012, of which 789 got resolved. However, 55 of the resolutions led to an agreement that the districts would address discipline practices as of fall 2014, and 32 districts were under investigation. Also reported was that discipline-based complaints or compliance reviews were found in all states except Alaska, Montana, North Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming (Losen et al., 2015).

Another recent national initiative was the Discipline Disparities Research-to-Practice Collaborative (DDRPC). The DDRPC group consisted of 26 nationally recognized researchers, educators, advocates, and policy analysts. The goal of the DDRPC was to address the problem of disciplinary disparities. Members of the group, Gregory, Bell, and Pollock (2016), designed a model for reducing disciplinary exclusion and disproportionality. The model consisted of strategies that could defuse potential conflict in the classroom and ultimately reduce the rate teachers refer students to the office for misconducts (Gregory et al., 2016). The strategies offered were: (a) Building supportive relationships by forging authentic relationships with all students; (b) Ensuring academic rigor by providing engaging and relevant instruction, and at the same time, set high expectations for all students; (c) Engaging in culturally related and responsive teaching by incorporating into curricula, resources, and school events the students' race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual identities; and (d) Creating bias-free classrooms and respectful

school environments (Gregory et al., 2016). Schools that implemented these strategies reported lower rates of victimization and discrimination, and they attained higher rates of student achievements because the students felt safer at school (Gregory et al., 2016).

School-wide Reform Efforts

Report show that school-wide behavior interventions implemented effectively can potentially reduce the racial discipline gaps (Losen, 2010). According to Skiba and Losen (2016), school-wide discipline intervention addresses three main areas: "(1) relationship building, through approaches such as restorative practices; (2) social-emotional learning approaches that improve students' ability to understand social interactions and regulate their emotions; and (3) structural interventions, such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) or changing disciplinary codes of conduct." The subsubsection below describes Restorative Discipline and PBIS.

Restorative Discipline

Restorative discipline practice is a school-wide intervention mechanism that uses a relational ecology framework to change educators' punitive mindsets toward student behavior. The goal is to build a positive school climate that promotes a sense of belonging and support individual development and social responsibility (Armour, 2016; The Institute for Restorative Justice and Restorative Dialogue (IRJRD), Sept. 2016). Restorative justice, derived from indigenous cultures and spiritual traditions, is entrenched in the principles of respect, dignity, and the essential worth and well-being of all people (Umbreit & Armour, 2011, p. 48). Its practices were founded on the belief that human connections get broken when a crime or distrusting situation occurs, and it throws the entire community into disharmony (Umbreit & Armour, 2011, p. 5).

Restorative justice is a philosophy, set of principles, and practices that unite together willing stakeholders that volunteer to do so after the occurrence of a crime or wrongdoing to directly address harm, make amends, and reinstate, to the extent possible, the broken normative trust (Umbreit & Armour, 2011). Restorative justice has been used mainly in response to criminal behavior. However, it is fast becoming a significant disciplinary practice in education because of its capacity to build safe communities for engaged learning, meet student needs, increase cross-cultural networks, and creäte collaborative and inclusive solutions that promote healing and restoration. Restorative discipline serves as an alternative to retributive zero-tolerance policies. It views violence, community decline, and fear-based responses as indicators of broken relationships (Umbreit & Armour, 2011, p. 2).

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

It is a program that focuses on the prevention of inappropriate student behaviors (Sugai & Horner, 2002),. It includes student instruction on appropriate behaviors while providing a common language and vehicle for unifying the school and district. PBIS also offers systemic and individual strategies that assist in the accomplishment of social and educational outcomes of the program (Sugai & Horner, 2002). PBIS is a three-tiered comprehensive approach to discipline – universal, targeted group, and individual – and the development and implementation of PBIS could happen on the school campus or district and state levels (Green, 2009). The universal tier consists of a school-wide system of intervention for all students. The targeted group tier involves teaching prevention and response strategies to groups of students, and it focuses on the 10% to 15% of students who benefit from more direct interventions. The single tier includes the most intensive prevention and response strategies, and it targets the 5% to 7% of students who exhibit high emotional behaviors (Green, 2009).

Based on the reports of school-wide discipline intervention strategies, it is evident that implementation of non-punitive school discipline practices might build relationships between teachers, administrators, and students that could create understanding and impact the disciplinary process and outcome. If educators and school leaders provide the opportunity to impart trust to their students, doors will open for dialogue and allow students the time to reflect on their actions; thereby effecting change. As explained by Rausch and Skiba (2005), school leaders who used this strategy without any form of bias suspended students only when all other options were exhausted. Therefore, the roles school leaders play in the implementation of the different discipline practices other than the punitive one, could contribute to the reduction in the rate students of color are removed discretionally to the DAEPs (Darensbourg, Perez, & Blake, 2010).

The section below describes the fourth strand of literature on the roles performed by school leaders in discretionary discipline practices. I reviewed articles, policy briefs, and excerpts from books. I also reviewed a dissertation written by Saltrick (2010), which focused on how school leaders make sense of accountability to help teachers develop their instructional practices. Table 2.4 above shows the types and number of literatures reviewed for strand four.

School Leaders' Role in Racial Discipline Gaps

School leaders experience intensifying pressures to reform schools into dynamic learning environments, making their roles to be more complicated (Fullan, 2014). The external reform mandates create more burden on school leaders as they are expected to assume new and extra responsibilities (Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017). At the same time, school leaders are responsible for the coordination and implementation of their campus policies to ensure school improvement. School leaders are therefore obligated to facilitate the implementation processes with other players, such as policymakers, politicians, school principals, teachers, parents, and

students, within the school community (Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017). This intersection of the internal and external mandates is a crucial concern for school leaders since it interrogates common practices and challenges the status quo (Kaniuka, 2012; Knapp and Feldman, 2012). Therefore, it is essential that school leaders make sense of their leadership roles to respond to the dynamic interactions between the internal goals and needs, as well as the external reform demands (Saltrick, 2010).

Educational leadership research suggests that school leaders have applied the sense-making approach to make and enact their meaning of reform demands based on preexisting understandings and intersecting social contexts inside and outside of school (Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017). The interactions between the school leaders' values and the school culture influence the internal processes through which they respond to reform mandates. That is, their values and those of others within the school community, including the school norms and traditions influence their sensemaking processes (Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2017). Therefore, multiple and often conflicting school contexts encapsulates school leaders' sensemaking. The intersection between their sense-making and the school culture can either reinforce existing practices or facilitate an educational change (Coburn, 2005; Schein, 2009). Thus, it is necessary to explore school leaders' sensemaking of discretionary discipline and the practices they employ to make decisions on student removal to the DAEP.

School leaders play a significant role in the implementation of discipline practices, especially in the way they make sense of student behavior and the actions they take based on their discretionary decision regarding the incident. Further, school leaders have the power to disrupt the racial disproportionate discipline gaps through the critical implementation of exclusionary discipline practices in collaboration with the teachers to prevent and respond

appropriately, thereby meeting the academic and behavioral needs of students, especially marginalized or students of color (Wilson, 2013). A school's discipline practices, including the school leaders' sense and decision making processes as they implement the discipline practices, could potentially reduce the disproportionate representation of students of color removed to DAEPs. It is, therefore, necessary to examine if schools apply differential discipline to any group of students as a result of their race, gender, ability, socioeconomic status, or a combination of these variables (Townsend, 2000).

Several researchers have studied the contributions of school and student characteristics to rates of racial disparity in exclusionary discipline and the racial discipline gap. School-level variables, including school leaders' perspectives on discipline, are amongst the highest predictors of racial inequality in out-of-school suspension or expulsion (Skiba et al., 2015). Researchers suggested factors such as, the race and attitudes of school administrators, apart from student behavior also influence the rate at which administrators suspend and expel students (Losen, 2011; Skiba et al., 2002).

The role of school leaders in predominately Black urban middle schools with high and low suspension rates examined by Mukuria (2002) showed that several factors contributed to lower suspension rates. These factors include high parental involvement, structured environment, schoolwide discipline programs, and mutual respect among students and teachers (Mukuria, 2002). Also, Skiba and Edl (2004) surveyed 325 school principals in Indiana to better understand their attitudes toward school discipline. The results indicated that the principals held varying perspectives on school discipline and evenly divided regarding the efficacy of zero-tolerance approaches. To analyze their findings, Skiba and Edl (2004) categorized the responses of the principals into three distinct perspectives. They were: those that exhibited prevention

orientation support for suspension and those that were in favor of pragmatic prevention (Skiba & Edl, 2004). Pragmatic or practical prevention positionality agrees with the supporters of suspension regarding its role in encouraging students to think about their behavior. However, principals that expressed practical prevention perspectives were less likely to believe that suspension and expulsion were their only options (Skiba & Edl, 2004). School leaders with a more significant orientation toward a prevention orientation served schools with fewer suspensions and resolved issues using conflict resolution, individual behavior plans, and other preventive and rehabilitative programs (Skiba & Edl, 2004).

Others suggested that there was a high correlation between the attitudes of school leaders and the way they used suspensions under the guise of maintaining school safety (Rausch & Skiba, 2005). The two identified characteristics of school leaders that suspended students frequently were: (a) those who believed that consistent punishment helps to improve student behavior, and (b) those who tend to blame parents for inappropriate student actions, assuming that poor parenting and poverty are the reasons students misbehave. These school administrators are inclined to suspend more students, unlike other administrators who regarded suspensions as last resorts and used them cautiously, yet at the same time enforced school rules (Rausch & Skiba, 2005). According to previous research, the disparities that exist in the way administrators address student behavior issues and make discretionary decisions is subjective to the implicit biases inherent in the process (Losen, 2011, 2013; McIntosh, Girvan, Horner, & Smolkowski, 2014). However, school leaders can implement critical discretionary discipline practices (Wilson, 2013) and they also have the power to reduce the overrepresentation by implementing discretionary discipline practices that could result in the reduction of the removal students of color to DAEPs.

In summary, the literature review sections provided insights on the four major areas examined in this chapter. The first strand of literature reviewed for this study was Research on Disproportionate Racial Discipline Gaps which highlights the national historical data that confirms the persistent overrepresentation of students of color in suspension, expulsion, and removal to DAEP. The second literature strand on Texas DAEP and Racial Discipline Gaps confirmed the trend shown in the national data. Texas data was reviewed because this study was conducted on school leaders of two high schools in a school district located in Southwestern U.S.. The third literature strand include the National and Texas Displine Practices Reform Efforts implemented both on a national and campus level as an attempt to reduce the overrepresentation of students of color in discipline. School leaders play a major role in the effective implementation of the discipline reform strategies. The fourth literature strand highlights the roles of school leaders in the implementatiuon of the nations punitive discipline practices, and their responsibility to ensure the safety of their campuses. The discretionary decisions made by campus leaders regarding a student behavior perceived to violate the student code of conduct are subjective and this contributes to the disparities inherent in the discipline practices. It is therefore important to study how school leaders make sense of discretionary discipline and the actions they take to disrupt the racial discipline gaps.

In the next section, I discuss how I employed the sensemaking theoretical framework to examine the differences in the actions taken by school leaders as a result of how they perceived discretionary discipline that relates to students of color.

Theoretical Framework: Sensemaking Theory

To theoretically frame this study, I draw on sensemaking theory. As such, I analyzed the research questions through the sensemaking conceptual framework to have a better

understanding of the way school leaders made sense of discretionary discipline and how they implemented discipline practices in reducing the rate of removal of African-American and Latino/a students to the DAEP.

Sensemaking Theory explains how organizational policies, the development, and existence of collective meanings might influence the decisions of leaders. Sensemaking was developed by Karl Weick in 1995 as an alternate approach for understanding the process of organizing, how individuals and organizations make meaning of events, and the ways people generate what they have interpreted (p. 13). Sensemaking offered a practical way to uncover the socio-psychological processes that play a part in organizational outcomes, instead of focusing the results themselves (Weick, 1995). Other scholars, such as, Brown, Stacey, and Nandhakumar, (2008) described sensemaking as "a search for plausibility and coherence, that is reasonable and memorable, which embodies past experiences and expectations, and maintains the self while resonating with others. It can be constructed retrospectively yet used prospectively and captures thoughts and emotions" (p. 6).

The sensemaking theoretical framework provides a detailed description of the process through which organizations and individuals make sense of situations and offers ways of understanding the process through which people ascribe different meanings to the same incident (Lippa, 2016). Other researchers defined sensemaking by emphasizing particular aspects of the process, content, and direction of sensemaking. Isabella (1992) and Ogawa (1991) highlighted how people use mental maps or schemas as a filter mechanism to interpret events to help them make sense of the situation and guide their behavior and actions. Also, Evans (2007a, b) described sensemaking as a term "generally understood to be the cognitive act of taking in information, framing it, and using it to determine actions and behaviors in a way that manages

meaning for individuals." Other scholars, such as Klein, Moon, and Hoffman (2006) posited sensemaking as a way of understanding relationships between people and their connections to places, presently occurring and past events. Sensemaking is an ongoing process; and uncertainty and ambiguity trigger each wave of the process (Weick, 1995 & 2005). The disruption of a routine process usually necessitates an individual to make sense of what is presently occurring amidst the interruption (Weick, 2005) and contemplate on what they would do next (Boudes & Laroche, 2009). The organizational application of sensemaking of a disaster or catastrophic occurrence was put forward by Weick (1995, 2005). The seven tenets of Weick's sensemaking theory are discussed in the section below.

Seven Tenets of Weick's Sensemaking

Individuals continually engage in making sense of their environment through the influence of seven interrelated properties identified by Weick (1995). Within the broader institutional context, sensemaking provides a framework for socially accepted actions and behaviors; and interruptions in routine processes necessitate individuals to make sense of the situation (Weick, 2005). As people make sense of the occurrence that has disrupted the routine, they deliberate on how to react to the situation (Boudes & Laroche, 2009).

The seven essential tenets of sensemaking influence the meaning made by individuals about any unusual occurrence. The seven tenets identified by Weick (1995, p. 3) are identity construction, retrospect, cues, plausibility, enactment, social contact, and ongoing events. The seven tenets are used to analyze the information gathered from the participants of this study.

According to Helms Mills, Thurlow, and Mills, (2010), Weick's seven interrelated properties influence the processes of sensemaking as we continuously engage in making sense of

our environment. Weick's seven sensemaking properties will be explained in the context of school leaders' roles as it relates to student discipline.

Grounded in identity construction. The way individuals view the world depend on who they are and the experiences that have shaped their lives. An individual's experiences and interactions with others continuously redefine their identity (Helms Mills et al., 2010).

School leaders' skills acquired throughout their profession and the interactions they have with other educators, students and parents impact how they continuously construct their identity. Examples of the experiences and interactions that redefine identity which effects our worldview cited by Helms Mills et al. (2010) were: parents, friends, religion, schools attended, workplace, and job responsibilities (p. 184).

School leaders' experiences and their contact with others help them construct their identity, their roles, and responsibilities within the school setting. The duty assigned to an individual is a determinant factor of how they develop their self-identity (Salazar, 2013; Weick, 1995). Therefore, identity construction pertains to the process of sensemaking by the sensemaker (Helms Mills et al., 2010).

Retrospective. To make sense of a current event, we usually refer to past experiences. Sensemaking process is, therefore, comparative since it involves the comparison of a present occurrence to a similar or similar previous event to make sense of the situation at hand (Helms Mills et al., 2010). Thus, how far people look back and remember the past event influence their sensemaking of the current situation (Clegg & Bailey, 2007). Values or priorities underscore the projects, services, policies, and practices that might be significant to an individual; hence, the experiences that the person chooses to refer to, pull from or stress provide additional insights into their belief system or agenda (Weick, 1995). Also, the experiences that are consciously left out

or ignored by an individual are equally crucial in sensemaking (Clegg & Bailey, 2007; Weick, 1995).

School leaders are always drawing from past experiences to make discretionary decisions regarding student discipline to maintain order. Brown and Jones (1998) stated that individuals make sense of organizational occurrences by shaping and omitting information to reinforce their self-esteem and feelings of control (p. 74).

Enactive of the environment. According to Weick (1995), sensemaking is the "feedstock of institutionalism" (p. 36), which suggests the shared notion of "this is the way things are done mentality" (Salazar, 2013, p. 61). As cited by Helms Mills et al. (2010), enactive of the environment implies that "sensemaking is about making sense of experience within our environment" (p. 185). They further stated that an individual's sensemaking could be limited or shaped by the same environment it created; thereby maintaining the property that the atmosphere generated by the sensemaker reinforces their sense of credibility (Helms Mills et al., 2010).

The school environment that is the school culture and climate, created by school leaders, could render them unable to consider situations rationally. Their sensemaking of students of color' perceived inappropriate behaviors influenced by the culture and climate of the school might impair their ability to think through an incident to make the right decision reasonably. Understanding a school's culture, what they get done, drop or attend to later than expected, including the norms of the school could all give an insight into the belief and value systems upheld within the school (Weick, 1995).

Social. The process of sensemaking is not solitary but depends on the interaction of an individual with others as they all socially construct meanings to make sense of an event. Also, an organization's rules, routines, symbols, and language impact an individual's sensemaking

through the practices or scripts for socially acceptable "appropriate" behavior provided to the individual by the organization (Helms Mills et al., 2010).

School leaders make sense of student behaviors related to race as they interact with other administrators, teachers, students and parents in conjunction with their perception of the shared understanding of the discipline policy, rules, routines, symbols, and the language of the school.

Ongoing. Sensemaking occurs in a non-stop subsequent processes due to the constant flow of information that we receive as we interact with the world and other individuals around us (Helms Mills et al., 2010). The statement that sensemaking is a non-stop process seems to contradict the account that shocking and ambiguous events trigger the sensemaking process (Helms Mills et al., 2010). It was affirmed by Weick (1995) that individuals are continually going through the process of sensemaking to understand what is going on around them. However, they isolate moments and cues from the non-stop sensemaking process to make sense of a current situation, when forced to "attend" to the new occurrence due to a break in the routine (Helms Mills et al., 2010; Weick, 1995). Any interruption to the flow of a regular activity could result in an emotional response such as relief, anger, or anxiety (Weick, 1995).

"The introduction of a new policy, accountability measure, or curriculum might disrupt the normal day-to-day activity of an administrator or teacher" (Salarza, 2013). It is vital that school leaders recognize how interruptions to their everyday routine could potentially impact their sensemaking process negatively, subject them to isolate pertinent cues which could result in faulty decision making.

Focused on and by extracted cues. People undergo the process of sensemaking by concentrating on specific signals while they entirely ignore others to support how they have interpreted an event. Sensemaking is retrospective, and past experiences, as well as rules and

regulations, prescribe the cues individuals will extract to make sense of an incident (Helms Mills et al., 2010; Weick, 1995 & 2005). The process of sensemaking might allow a person to interpret cues in ways that support their beliefs (Helms Mills et al., 2010; Weick, 1995). It is, therefore, possible for individuals to ignore the obvious if they believe it contradicts their notion of "what was right or wrong" and thus extract cues that support what they have learned or experienced.

One could attribute school leaders' discretionary decisions that lead to racial disproportionality in the discipline of students of color to their past experiences, in addition to policy, rules, and regulations, which influences the cues they extract to make sense of the student behavior and decide on the consequence that aligns with their belief.

Driven by plausibility rather than accuracy. According to Helms Mills et al. (2010), "driven by plausibility rather than accuracy means that we do not rely on the accuracy of our perceptions when we make sense of an event. Instead, we look for cues that make our sensemaking seem plausible" (p. 185). The process of sensemaking does not depend on accuracy; alternatively, it relates to "plausibility, pragmatics, coherence, reasonableness, creation, invention and instrumentality" (Weick, 1995, p. 56).

From the perspective of an individual, the statement is logical, there is an established pattern, and it makes sense (Weick, 1995). The decision made by the individual would rely on the misleading cues that eliminate the actual information. Looking for signals that make our sensemaking seem plausible distorts the accuracy of any information and it results in our reliance on incorrect decision-making to determine what is right or wrong (Helms Mills et al., 2010).

School leaders regularly encounter each of these factors, and they use established decisions on previous incidents, regarded as socially acceptable and credible, to inform their

attempts to make sense of the discipline practices that relate to the student behavior. The narrative in the office discipline referral may not be accurate; however, it probably offers an account that could withstand criticism and "keep things moving" (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005, p. 415).

These seven interrelated Sensemaking properties: construction of identity, retrospect, cues, plausibility, enactment, social contact, and ongoing events as described above were utilized to analyze my data. They provided an understanding of how each property influenced the processes of sensemaking school leaders continuously engaged in as they made sense of the behaviors of students of color and how this impacted the decisions they made in reducing the disproportionality in student removal to the DAEP. I applied the seven properties of Weick's sensemaking theory in the analyses of the information gathered from the respondents and were explained in the context of school leaders' roles as it relates to student discipline.

It is assumed that the sensemaking of school leaders is important regarding educational issues, such as programs, policies, and practices because the meaning they make influences their explanation of the problem and the actions they take in response to the issue (Evans, 2007). Also, the sensemaking of school leaders is contextual and impacted by the organizational philosophy, as well as their roles and responsibilities within the organization, and their racial identity (Evans, 2007).

As such, sensemaking is useful for this study for several reasons. First, for the purpose of this study, the sensemaking of the school leaders is particularly important as they make sense of dicretionary discipline policies related to the issue of race. Secondly, the meaning school leaders make about a discipline event related to race could potentially influence their explanation of the problem and the actions they will take in response to the issue. Thirdly, it is assumed that the

sensemaking of the school leaders is contextual and impacted by the institutional construction of discretionary discipline. Lastly, the school leaders' roles and responsibilities within the educational settings, as well as their racial identity will impact their sensemaking.

The application of Sensemaking Theory in this study orients within Weick's conceptualized sensemaking during a disastrous situation. The decisions made by school leaders to remove students of color to the DAEPs on discretionary basis contributes to the disproportionate rate when compared to their White peers. The outcomes of these decisions are catastrophic for students of color and fit within the sensemaking analytic framework. The analysis of the current study involved the examination of how school leaders made sense of students of color's behavior, perceived to be inappropriate and the discretionary decisions of the administrators through the lens of the seven interrelated properties identified by Weick (1995).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I first reviewed the research on the national historical patterns that confirmed the disproportionate racial discipline gaps inherent in the punitive discipline practices used in the nation's public schools; and the Texas discipline and patterns of removal of students to the DAEP that mirrors the nation's trend. I also reviewed the literature on both national and school leaders' discipline reform efforts. Also, I reviewed school leaders' roles in the discretionary discipline. These strands of literature affirm the persistent racial discipline gaps and the different reform efforts that have been implemented to disrupt the pattern. Few studies have examined how school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEPs that result in their overrepresentation and the disruption of the racial discipline gap. However, there is a need to explore how principals make sense of discretionary discipline and the actions they employed in reducing the overrepresentation of students of color in DAEPs.

After that, I discussed the sensemaking theory and how it could be applied to school leaders' sensemaking of discretionary discipline around the issue of race and the actions they take in creating different structures and systems to reduce the disproportionality in the representation of students of color removed to the DAEP. In the next chapter, I describe this study's methods.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Chapter three outlines the research methods and design that were employed in this study. In this chapter, I briefly revisit the purpose of this study, the research questions, followed by the rationale for using a qualitative interpretive phenomenological study approach. Finally, I discuss the methods for data collection and analyses, the research validity, and my positionality as the researcher of this study. Again, the purpose of this study is to examine how high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEPs and the actions or practices they employed to reduce the overrepresentation of students of color.

Research Questions

The questions that guided this research were:

1. How do high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?
2. How do high school leaders' sense-making inform their actions regarding the discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?
3. What do high school leaders do to prevent the disproportionate representation of students of color amongst those removed discretionally to the DAEP?

Research Design

In this section, I highlighted several components of the research design. The subsections discussed are the phenomenological approach employed in this study; the process and criteria used in selecting the sites and the participants of the study; including the data collection processes. Other subsections discussed below are the data analysis and data quality; limitations of the study; as well as the researcher's positionality and trustworthiness. I used a qualitative

research design to examine how high school leaders made sense of discretionary removal and implemented discipline practices to make progress in reducing the disproportionate representation of African-American and Latino/a students in the DAEPs. A qualitative methodology was used to explore and understand how individuals and groups interpret social or human problems (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research design was selected because of its interpretive approach and alignment with the sensemaking theory, which is this study's theoretical framework.

In addition, some of the strengths of the qualitative research method that align with this study includes (a) using it to conduct in-depth studies on a limited number of cases, (b) define complex phenomena; provide individual participant case information, (c) conduct comparative analysis between and among cases; collect data in the natural settings; and (d) it is responsive to local conditions and participants' needs (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Other strengths identified are that it provides information on participants' experiences and understanding of the phenomenon within the context of the study, which helps the researcher pinpoint contextual factors related to the phenomenon investigated, and how participants interpret constructs. Qualitative data also highlights how and why the phenomenon occurred, based on words and descriptions of the participants (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The strengths of qualitative research align with the sensemaking theory. Sensemaking by an individual involves the construction of the meaning of an event through cognitive, emotional, and physical processes.

Phenomenological Approach

To better understand how the school leaders make sense of discretionary discipline and how they implement discipline practices in reducing the rate African-American and Hispanic students are removed to the DAEP when compared to their White peers, I utilized a

phenomenological research method (Wertz, 2005) to conduct this study. This approach was employed to support my use of the sensemaking theoretical framework.

Phenomenology focuses on the subjective experiences of individuals as is before and independent of scientific knowledge (Wertz, 2005). While most qualitative research shares a desire to understand participants' perspectives about a particular phenomenon, the framework of phenomenology explicitly seeks to understand their experience and how they make meaning of that experience. This factor again, align with this study's sensemaking theoretical framework.

According to van Manen (1984), "the point of phenomenological research is to borrow other people's experiences and their reflections on their experiences to better be able to come to an understanding of the deeper meaning or significance of an aspect of human experience" (p. 16). This approach focuses on subjective experiences of individuals prior to and independent of scientific knowledge (Wertz, 2005). Phenomenology acknowledges that everyday experiences, such as the experience of being angry or happy, are often taken for granted. An individual's reality at a given moment is their state of mind or consciousness at that particular time. Also, this truth is always "interpreted by individuals, and it is subjectively meaningful to them as a coherent world" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 18). Likewise, campus administrators subjectively interpret student discipline based on their experiences in a way that makes sense to them.

The participants were interviewed using an interview protocol (See Appendix E) adapted from Lippa (Sensemaking as a framework for understanding how aspiring anti-racist school leaders enact their learnings from a principal preparation program to disrupt the racial discipline gap, 2016) because it is a doctoral dissertation which also utilized the sensemaking theoretical framework. The information gathered from the school leaders enabled me to understand how

they made sense of discretionary discipline and implemented discipline practices in reducing the disproportional representation of minority in DAEP. It was also anticipated that the information gathered will highlight the essence of the participants' lived experiences (Patton, 2002, p. 104) as they implemented discretionary discipline practices phenomenon.

This study aimed to provide a space for campus administrators to share their stories about school discipline practices, especially DAEP discretionary removal of students, in their own words and from their perspectives (Thomas & Pollio, 2002).

Purposive sampling was used to select both the study sites and the participants. Purposive samples are non-probability samples selected based on certain criteria that is relevant to the objective of the research (Mertens, 2015; Starks & Brown, 2007).

Site Selection

The two study sites selected are high schools located in a suburban school district situated in Southwestern U.S. The pseudonyms assigned to the sites are Rover and Spark High Schools. I used purposive sampling to identify schools based on two criteria. First, the two schools' five-years longitudinal data illustrated the school leaders made some progress in reducing the overrepresentation of students of color removed to the DAEP (Appendix C). Second, the schools' data showed progress in reducing overrepresentation and was confirmed by a district representative. Third, the school leaders that participated in this study were in these schools and in their current roles before, during, and after the discipline gaps reduced.

Participant Selection

Through purposive sampling process the participants selected included one campus principal and one assistant principal from each of the two schools to participate in the study, a total of four participants (See participants' profile on page 73, Table 4.1). The school leaders are

the unit of analysis. All of the four principals have experienced the phenomenon of the study - discretionary discipline practices (Mertens, 2015; Starks & Brown, 2007) and contributed to the schools' efforts to reduce removals of students of color to the DAEP. The criterion for selecting the school leaders was that they have worked in the school for at least three of the five years of the discipline data collected. The selection criterion ensured that the information gathered were from the perspectives and lived experiences of the school leaders directly involved in the decision-making. It also gave insight into how the school leaders made sense of discretionary removal and implement discipline practices that potentially contributed to the reduction in the disproportionate representation of African-American and Latino/a students in the DAEP.

The selection of a small number of participants, four, facilitated a close association between the respondents and me and it enhanced the validity of the in-depth inquiry into the school discretionary discipline practices (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). It also allowed me to develop a relationship with the participants and it created opportunities to ask clarifying questions in a comfortable setting. The sample size allowed me to conduct in-depth and rich interviews with the participants. The sample size is consistent with previous research that employed the theoretical framework of sensemaking (Coburn, 2001; Coburn, 2005; Evans, 2007b).

Data Collection and Procedures

To collect data for this study, I used interviews, observations, and reviewed documents. I conducted two sessions of face-to-face interviews with each participant. The duration of each interview session was approximately an hour. The interviews were conducted after work hours at the schools, Rover and Spark high school, in a quiet area, free from distractions and suitable for recording. The face-to-face interviews occurred from December 2017 to January 2018.

Observation of professional development, faculty meetings and trainings occurred from January 2018 to February 2018.

Interviews. A semi-structured interview was employed as a data collection strategy in this phenomenological approach to elicit the participants' stories in January 2018 (Starks & Brown, 2007). I conducted two interviews per participant for approximately one hour to ensure the interviews were in-depth enough to gather quality information in regard to how they made sense of discretionary discipline and the type of actions they took when they perceive a student's behavior as being disruptive.

The first set of interview items were subdivided into two parts. The questions in the first section were intended to gather information on the participants' career history and the second part focused on school discipline general issues. The second interview focused on how the school leaders made sense of the disciplinary policies used on their campuses, particularly the discretionary discipline practices. These questions were also intended to help me understand how the school leaders' sensemaking influences the decision they made regarding the discretionary DAEP removal of students of color. The information gathered from the participants' responses could also give insight as to the types of behavior school leaders viewed as disruptive. See the cover letter that includes the participant's consent information and the interview protocols in Appendices D & E. Interview data was audio recorded, transcribed, deidentified and input into the qualitative research software NVivo, Version 11, to analyze the data collected from individual interviews. Transcripts were shared with participants to verify their responses, and for clarification purposes.

Observations. I conducted two observations of each participant as they led staff /faculty meetings and professional developments that focused on their school discipline practices and

cultural responsive teaching. The purpose of the observations was to gather additional information on the way school leaders interact with school personnel or others involved in the implementation of discretionary discipline to make decisions on the consequences they assign to students. Examples of sessions I observed included meetings with teachers and leadership team meetings, and professional developments pertinent to the campus disciplinary policies. These meetings allowed me to note how the administrators addressed the concerns regarding the issue of race and referrals written by teachers, including the relationship teachers build with students to promote an inclusive classroom climate and culturally responsive instruction.

Documents. Documents were collected to corroborate the information gathered through interviews and observations. These included sample referrals and other information related to the management of discretionary removal. I masked the demographic information to protect the identity of the participants, teachers, and students involved in the infraction. I also included contextual data on each of the two high schools' discipline practices and the following school-level documents for analyses: (1) demographic information of the schools; (2) five-year longitudinal school discipline data; (3) local code of conduct guides for each school or the whole district; and field notes that contain information I wrote down during my observations and interview sessions. The two interview sessions per participant, approximately one hour each, ensured the interviews were in-depth enough to gather quality information in regard to how the school leaders made sense of discretionary discipline and the type of actions they took when they perceived a student of color's behavior as being disruptive. Before conducting the interviews, each participant received a consent form indicating their willingness to join the study and an acknowledgment that their involvement would be entirely voluntary and anonymous. I informed them that they could terminate their membership at any point in the study. Written consent was

collected from participants to protect their privacy interests. However, they were required to give verbal consent per the guidelines of the Internal Review Board (IRB) specifications.

The semi-structured interviews permitted the introduction of ideas that I had not considered (Willis, 2007) when I drafted the interview questions. However, to give sufficient consideration to all research questions, a general list of guiding questions was employed. Before each interview, I reread and revised the questions when necessary to ensure the questions were easy to understand.

The interview questions draw mainly from the sensemaking theoretical framework and also included items to determine how the school leaders implemented discretionary discipline practices that have the potential to reduce the disproportionality in the removal of students of color to DAEPs. Sensemaking necessitates an understanding of the culture, norms, expectations, language, and general consideration of the ways things are done in organizations, such as schools (Salazar, 2013; Weick, 1995). The phenomenological approach was utilized to analyze the qualitative data gathered from the research.

In phenomenological approach, the assumption is that the researcher and the participant believe that the audience will understand their words as spoken and intended. Therefore, I asked the participants to give accounts of their experiences of the phenomenon and asked probing questions to encourage the respondents to elaborate on details to achieve clarity and stay focused on their lived experiences (Starks & Brown, 2007).

Data Analysis

I used the interpretive phenomenological analysis to analyze the data collected from the interview sessions. Interpretive phenomenological analysis is an approach that aims to offer insights on how an individual within a context makes meaning of a phenomenon as the method

of interpretation in this study. The interpretive analysis is an iterative, inductive process of decontextualization and recontextualization (Ayres, Kavanaugh, & Knafl, 2003; Morse & Field, 1995). Starks and Brown (2007) explained the processes of decontextualization and recontextualization as follows:

> During de-contextualization, the researcher/analyst will separate data from the original context of individual cases and assigns codes to units of meaning in the texts. In re-contextualization, the researcher/analyst will examine the codes for patterns and then reintegrate, organize, and reduce the data around central themes, and relationships are drawn from all the cases and narratives (p. 5).

I used NVivo, Version 11, a computer software package for qualitative analysis, to analyze the data collected from individual interviews. Transcripts were shared with participants to verify their responses, and for clarification purposes.

The coding process involved uploading the source of information, the interviews transcripts. I first coded the participants' responses deductively and then analyzed them for patterns developed in regards how the principals made sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP. Other codes were added inductively as I read the interview transcripts over a couple of times. The deductive codes developed prior to the interview sessions based on the seven properties of the sensemaking theory were identity construction, retrospect, cues, plausibility, enactment, social contact, and ongoing events. Other codes were developed and added as I read through the responses of the participants – inductive codes. The inductive codes developed were categorized as sub codes or child nodes. This process helped determine the patterns that emerged in the participants' perspectives. Examples of inductive codes that emerged is relational leadership under the identity construction inductive code.

The data analysis approach followed a step-by-step guide developed by Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006). The first step involves preparing the data for analysis. I completed the transcriptions within three weeks of the interview sessions, and school-related documents and notes were organized accordingly to ensure they were relevant to the sensemaking process based on the participants' descriptions. The constant comparative method (CCM) was used to clean and prepare the data through the continuous merging and compartmentalization of interview transcriptions and my notes. Constant comparison method is a data-analytic process that involves comparing interpretations and findings that emerges from a study with existing findings as it emerges from the data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Constant comparison contributes to the validity of the research (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, & Futing Liao, 2004). A similar exercise in this stage of data analysis is data reduction, whereby I reduced the notes collected and other documents to only those pertinent to the study for analyses.

According to Glaser (1978), memoing is a way to "write up ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 72). Memos tie together the different pieces of data into conceivable clusters and exceed a surface level synthesis of data. It allows the coders to go beyond the predetermined categories based on theory and uncover larger themes (Lippa, 2016). It is important to mention that my role and background informed the theoretical framework used to analyze the data.

Data quality. Before the manual coding of the interview transcripts, I consulted a doctoral graduate student to establish reliability in the coding scheme. Intercoder reliability is the degree to which two or more individuals, or coders, agree (Miles & Huberman, 1996). To increase reliability, the graduate student and I coded the statements from one of the 60-minute interviews separately. We made three attempts to determine the degree of our intercoder

reliability. We both attained between 93 - 96% on the scale of between-coder agreement. The goal of this process was to attain a 90% range on the scale of the between-coder agreement to ensure that measures of reproducibility were highly efficacious. Measures of reproducibility are the likelihood that different coders that have received the same training assign the equivalent value to the same piece of content. I also solicited critical feedback regarding the descriptions, analyses, and interpretation of findings from other research experts. These advisors included the members of this dissertation committee, peers with a similar research interest in school discipline policy, and others that are familiar with sensemaking as a theoretical construct. Babbie (2008) stated that validity is a term used to describe a measure that accurately reflects the concept it is intended to measure. In qualitative studies, validity refers to constructs of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Limitations. Transferability refers to the degree to which the results can be generalized to other contexts or settings. The sample participants include campus principals and assistant principals that have implemented discretionary discipline practices for at least three years in the two high schools. The results of this study will not be generalizable to school leaders of all schools and districts across the country. Therefore, the consumers of this research would need to interpret the findings appropriately. It is up to the reader to make critical judgments about the generalizability of the findings. Questions of how far the conclusions can be generalized are relevant to transferability (Lippa, 2016).

The dependability of research hinges on the assumption that it can be replicated and obtaining the same results if observed a second time (Trochim, 2006). Dependability emphasizes the need to recognize and understand the context within which the research occurs. Miles and Huberman proposed a set of relevant questions to guide researchers to ensure they

consider the issues of dependability (1994, p. 278). I carefully deliberated on them throughout the process of refining the research questions to ensure clarity of purpose, ascertain "meaningful parallelism across data sources." I also maintained data quality checks through the member checking process (Miles, 1994).

Also, confirmability refers to the degree to which others can confirm the results of a study (Trochim, 2006). I sought out the expertise of a peer in the graduate program to verify that I characterized the words of the participants appropriately within the sensemaking theoretical perspectives, and according to the coding structure.

Researcher's Positionality

The interpretive paradigm posits that the investigators' values are inherent in all phases of the research process and that we understand the truth through dialogue (Crotty, 2015). According to anthropologist Franz Boas (1928), all knowledge is open to interpretation, and we cannot separate ourselves from what we know. My experiences as a teacher and an assistant principal provide an operational understanding of the work of principals and the roles, they play implementing discretionary discipline. This contextual knowledge could impact the way I will interpret what is observed and heard during the interview sessions at the sites. The validity checks will help mitigate any bias in my interpretations of the information gathered.

I have a background in public education as a classroom teacher for six years and as assistant principal for the past five years in the same school district. However, I have no affiliation with the schools focused on in this study. These experiences place me in a valuable position to experience common perspectives with other school administrators on issues concerning the discretionary removal of students. I am also an African-American parent, who has experienced differing viewpoints of disciplinary decision-making as an administrator and as

a parent. It is, however, important that I stay mindful of my positionality and remain objective during the data collection, analyses, and reporting processes.

Starks and Brown (2007) stated that qualitative analysis is inherently subjective since the researcher is the instrument for analysis. I was mindful of my role in making all the judgments about coding, categorizing, de-contextualizing, and recontextualizing the data, including the expectation that I assured rigor and trustworthiness (Starks & Brown, 2007). I ensured honesty and was vigilant about my perspective, pre-existing thoughts and beliefs, and developing hypotheses. I engaged in a self-reflective process of "bracketing," whereby I recognized my prior knowledge and assumptions and set them aside (Gearing, 2004; Sokolowski, 2000; van Manen, 1990). However, I did not abandon them, with the analytic goal of attending to the participants' accounts with an open mind (Gearing, 2004; Sokolowski, 2000; van Manen, 1990).

Supplementary reflexive practices discussed by some scholars include consulting with colleagues and mentors and writing memos throughout the analyses to help the researcher/analyst examine how their thoughts and ideas evolve throughout the study, as they engage more deeply with the data (Cutcliffe, 2003; Finlay, 2002). Furthermore, researchers create audit trails through memos written to document their thoughts and reactions to keep track of emerging impressions of what the data mean, how they relate to each other, and how their engagement with the data shapes their understanding of the initial hypotheses (Cutcliffe, 2000).

Finally, I examined the implication of different perceptions (or multiple realities) but did not pronounce which set of opinions are right or more accurate or more real (Patton, 2002). I reported and discussed all perspectives.

Trustworthiness. Credibility involves establishing that the results are believable (Trochim, 2006). The purpose of the study was to describe or understand an event that required

discretionary discipline, from the participant's point of view. Hence, the participants and the researcher are the only ones who can legitimately judge the credibility of the results. However, it is vital to share transcribed interviews with participants to rule out the possibility of misinterpreting their words and misrepresenting their perspectives (Maxwell, 2005). I carried out the process of information sharing with participants - referred to as "member checks" (Maxwell, 2005) while collecting data and during the data analyses to allow participants clarify and modify the information gathered. Also, the process of triangulation was utilized to attain a rich and thick description of the information gathered from the participants. I sent the findings to the participants to get their insights on whether the information contained in the findings reflected their experiences. Finally, I also used the triangulation technique to validate the findings that emerged. Triangulation is a research method that enables a researcher to validate data using cross verification from multiple sources (Heale & Forbes, 2013). It refers to the application and integration of numerous research methods to study the same phenomenon. The results of the qualitative study were used to validate findings that emerge from the descriptive statistics. I compared the themes from the analyzed qualitative data with trends seen in the descriptive data analyses to determine how school leaders' responses aligned with patterns in the data. Also, I was able to determine how the school leaders related to students, especially those perceived to be disruptive, and how their perceptions of the students impacted the actions they took in discretionary discipline processes.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the reviewed literature. I then described the research methodology and methods, sampling techniques, data collection instruments, and data analyses processes used to understand discipline practices used in Rover and Spark high schools over a

five-year period. Also included was my role as the researcher and assurances. The findings that emerged from the stories told by the school leaders relating to how they made sense of discretionary discipline practices and how they implemented it in reducing the disproportionate rates students of color were removed to the DAEP when compared to their White peers were organized into themes throughout the interview process. These findings are presented in chapters four and five.

Chapter Four

Research Question Results

Chapter four comprises five sections. The first section contains the overview of the chapter including the themes developed from the codes and sub-codes developed from the participants' responses to the research questions. I presented a description of the research setting and the introductions of the participants in the second and third sections. I will address each research question in the fourth section including the research results gathered from the face-to-face interviews. I will summarize the chapter in the fifth section.

This study examined how four school leaders in two high schools, Rover and Spark, made sense of discretionary removal and what they did to make progress in reducing the overrepresentation of students of color at the DAEP. The sensemaking theory and its concepts provided the conceptual framework utilized in this study to understand the participants' experiences regarding discretionary DAEP removal and their decision-making. As stated by Weick (1995, p. 18), "sensemaking begins with the sensemaker." By examining and discussing the sensemaking processes of high school leaders when they make disciplinary decisions, a gap in literature will be addressed. Also, it will provide a reference point for future research and inform school leaders and districts about the systems and structures that can be put in place to improve their professional practices. This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How do high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?
2. How do high school leaders' sense-making inform their actions regarding the discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?

3. What do high school leaders do to prevent the disproportionate representation of students of color amongst those removed discretionally to the DAEP?

I conducted two separate face-to-face interviews with each participant. The duration of each interview session was approximately an hour. I coded the participants' interviews transcripts deductively and analyzed for patterns to understand how the principals made sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP. Personal and professional backgrounds are examples of the deductive codes. Thereafter, other codes, such as needs to preserve instructional time and student advocates were added inductively. I classified codes into themes by examining detailed descriptions, individual experiences, and the actions of participants. The table below (Table 4.1) show the codes (C), sub-codes (SC), and themes (T) that emerged from the data.

Developed Themes (T), Codes (C), and Sub-codes (SC)

Table 4.1: Themes, Codes, and Sub-codes from Participants' Responses

RQ1: How do high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?		
High School Leaders' Sensemaking of Discretionary Removal to the DAEP **(T1)**	Data sources **(C)**	• Discipline exclusionary DATA – DAEP **(SC)** • Campus climate survey **(SC)**
	Discipline policies, professional expectations and experiences **(C)**	• Exclusionary State, district, and campus discipline policies; and on-the-job training **(SC)**
RQ2: How do high school leaders' sense-making inform their actions regarding the discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?		
High school leaders' understanding of contextual factors informed by their sensemaking of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP **(T2)**	Teachers' cultural misconceptions and their expectations of school administrators **(C)**	• Biases and expectations that students will receive punitive consequences **SC)**
	Need to preserve instructional time **(C)**	• Quick response to resolve issues and send students back to class **(SC)**

	Student Advocates **(C)**	• Need to advocate for students and maintain safe learning school environment **(SC)**
RQ3: What do high school leaders do to prevent the disproportionate representation of students of color amongst those removed discretionally to the DAEP?		
High school leaders' actions (structures and systems) to prevent the disproportionate representation of students of color removed discretionally to the DAEP **(T3)**	Provide targeted professional development opportunities and trainings **(C)**	• Cultural competency and culturally responsive instructions **(SC)**
	Provide campus-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) **(C)**	• Restorative discipline practices **(SC)**
	Promote relationship building amongst stakeholders **(C)**	• Parental engagement • Community engagement • Teacher-student relationship • Administrator-teacher relationship • Administrator-student-parent relationship **(SC)**

Note: T represents the theme, codes (C), and sub-codes (SC)

The research results are presented in thematic sequence as illustrated in Table 4.1 above. After each research question is discussed, the theme will be presented, followed by a presentation of participant results. All research results will be presented from one participant, respective to the specific theme and its correlating codes before transitioning to results from the next participant. The process will repeat until the results for all research questions have been presented. The school and campus settings are discussed below to provide contextual data on both schools. After which, I will discuss the participants' profile.

Campus and District Setting

The section below presents the context of both schools in relation to the district and how they influence the discretionary decisions of the school leaders to remove students to the DAEP

or otherwise. Both Rover and Spark high schools' student enrollment and DAEP data (2011 - 2015), including those of the school district's confirm racial discipline gaps. Altough, Rover and Spark's data indicated some reductions in the DAEP removal of students of color.

District and Campus Demography Data and Discipline Matrix

Discussed below is the background of Rover and Spark in comparison to the district regarding student enrollment. Also discussed are the information on the staff demography, student discretionary removal to the DAEP, and the Academic/Extracurricular Course Offerings on both Rover and Spark high schools. The background on both schools provides some context on how different factors influence the discretionary decisions of school leaders to remove students to the DAEP or otherwise.

District student enrollment data. The district's five-year longitudinal student enrollment data (Appendix H: Table H.1) indicated a consistent enrollment in the percentages of Latino/a, Native Hawaiin, and Two or More Races. The three ethnic groups' enrollment was at approximately 30%. 0.2%, and 4.1%. The Asian students' enrollment rates increased from 12% - 13.5% between 2011 and 2015. However, the enrollment of the African-American students declined from 9.1% to 8.6 % within the five-year period. On the other hand, the White's students' enrollment showed no significant difference.

Rover student enrollment data. Rover high school student enrollment rates (Appendix H: Table H2) for each ethnic group, did not show a significant fluctuation when compared with the changes showed in the district data. The African-American students' enrollment was consistently at approximately 14% between 2011 and 2015, Latino/a was between 33% and 35% during the five-year period, while White students' enrollment was at approximately 40% during

this period. Asian and Native American students' enrollments were at approximately 5% and 0.4% respectively.

Spark student enrollment data. Spark high school student enrollments data (Appendix H: Table H3) indicated that the African-American student enrollment between 2011 and 2015 was between 15 – 18 %. The enrollment rate of Latino/a students was at about 44%, while the White students' enrollment was at approximately 30%. Asian students' population, less than 5% and Native American students' enrollment at less than 0.2% within the five years.

The data on both schools indicated Rover high school had a higher number of White students, while Spark had more Latino/a students. The African-American population in Rover within the five-year period was below 14.5% compared to Spark that ranged between 15 - 18%. Linda, the principal of Rover high school mentioned the racial disparity in the enrollment of students of color in academies and program of studies offered when compared to their White peers. The state and district's mandatory/discretionary discipline matrix guide the campus leaders' decisions in addressing student behaviors that violate the student code of conduct.

District school board approved mandatory/discretionary discipline matrix. The disciplinary action reason codes stipulated by the Texas Education Agency with Chapter 37 and those decided by the school district as permitted by the state are shown in Table G.2 (Appendix G). The table higlights the different offenses that requires mandatory removal to the DAEP or expulsion to the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) depending on the severity of the offense. Examples of such offenses are possession of weapon, drugs, or guns. The less severe offenses, such as cheating/lying, disrespect for staff, and inappropriate familiarity are left at the administrators discretion to make the decision to remove the student or otherwise.

Campus Profile and Data on Discretionary Removal to the DAEP

The campus (Rover and Spark) data on the discretionary removal of students to the DAEP (Appendix H: Tables H.5 – H.8) confirmed disproportionality within the subgroups when compared to the student enrollment data. African-American and Latino/a students had higher representation amongst those removed to the DAEP. Although the five-year longitudinal data showed significant disproportionality on the discretionary removal of students to the DAEP, it was also evident that the two high schools and the district achieved some reductions in the overrepresentation rates of students of color. The next section provides other contextual information on both Rover and Spark high schools.

Campus information on academy, program of study and course sequence. Both comprehensive high schools offer programs of study within different Academies to prepare all students for college and career upon graduation. Rover and Spark are "partnered" to effectively offer similar programs of study efficiently within the district, although both campuses do not offer all courses. Students can apply to transfer for a unique program of study not available at their home campus.

The Academy offerings on both campuses include Business and Industry, Public Services, Health Science, STEM, and Visual and Performing Arts. However, the programs of study within each Academy are unique to each campus. For example, Rover does not offer Agricultural Mechanics & Metal Technologies, and Animal Sciences in the Business and Industry Academy offered at Spark. Also, the Hospitality Services replaced the Culinary Program of Study at Spark.

Furthermore, the STEM Academy at Spark high school comprises of Computer Science and Engineering; on the other hand, Rover offers Biotechnology in addition to the two. Another

campus background that both schools have in common is the numerous student clubs and activities available to all students.

Extracurricular activities at Rover and Spark high school. Both Rover and Spark have numerous extracurricular activities – clubs and events that to include all students regardless of the academic levels, socioeconomic background, and race/ethnicity. Examples of these clubs are Academy Ambassadors , Alma Mexicana Ballet Folklorico, Anime Club, Boys soccer, Boys Track, Bowling club, Builders of Tomorrow, Cross Country, Drama Club, Environmental Awareness Club, FCA, Football, Football Booster Club, French Club, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Girls Basketball, Girls Soccer, Golf, GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance), HOSA, National Honor Society, Speech & Debate, Show Choir, Special Olympics, Student Council, Swim Team, Texas Association of Future Educators (T.A.F.E), UIL Mathematics, UIL Number Sense, UIL Robotics Club, and UIL Science.

Other sources of information gathered on both campuses included teacher professional developments and programs or events organized to address students and parents during scheduled observation sessions.

Staff information. The outcomes of the hiring processes undergone by Rover and Spark leadership team over the five-year period indicated some attempts to hire teachers that would somewhat represent the students' ethnic groups. While both schools increased the number of teachers of color and other minority teachers, the data showed disproportionality in their number or percent in relation to the students on both campuses (Appendix H: Tables H.7 and H.8). Also, both high schools comprised of more female teachers. Regarding years of experience, the highest number of teachers are those with 1-5 years of teaching experience in both high schools. Rover's high school data showed that teachers with 6-10 years of experience were the next

largest group. On the other hand, Spark's data showed that teachers with 11-20 years of experience as the second largest group.

Participants' Introductions/Profile

The leaders that participated in this study were four administrators in two high schools located in a suburban school district in a central city in Texas. Pseudonyms were used to replace all the participants', and school names and all students' descriptive details regarding disciplinary events disguised. Table 4.2 below displays relevant demographic and facts on the four participants. The total years of experience equate to the number of years in public education and number of years in a similar position indicates how long they held the same title in another school before their current position. Previous roles describe different career path each participant took to their current position.

Table 4.2: Participants' Information

Participant's Pseudonym	School's Pseudonym	Sex	Role	Race	Total Years of Experience	Years in current school	Years in Current Position	Years in Similar Position	Previous Roles/Professional Experiences
Linda	Rover HS	F	Principal	White	26	7	4	3	Curriculum Specialist, Professional Development Specialist, Social Worker
John	Rover HS	M	Assistant Principal	Latino	10	3	3	2	Sales Representative, Teacher, & Instructional Coach
Albert	Spark HS	M	Principal	Black	28	4	4	8	Teacher & Asst. Principal
Jane	Spark HS	F	Assistant Principal	White	18	4	4	0	Teacher & Coach

Linda – Principal at Rover High School

Linda is a White female principal that has served at Rover high school for the past four years. She had served in the same school a total of seven years in the capacity of an assistant and associate principal before she became the campus principal. Linda had served as an educator for the past twenty-six years in different capacities – as a teacher, district curriculum, and professional development specialist, including social worker before she became the campus principal. Linda's desire to change the way things are done, thinking outside the box, for better results influenced her career in educational leadership:

> I honestly was not planning to become a high school Principal. That was never something I planned to do. It wasn't. I know, I talk to a lot of people that they have that aspiration. I have not had that aspiration. I loved being an Instructional Coach for the district. I loved teaching. I'm not one of those people, who's super ambitious just to get ahead. That wasn't my goal.

She continues:

> I guess, once I became an administrator I felt like, the things we were involved with, I wanted to have more say in how we did things because I feel like a lot of what's done is done because it's been done for a long time but, I don't feel like we look outside the box enough and try new things and different ... For example, if something's not working we keep doing it frequently. I never liked that. I like to, "Well, let's try something different." I think once I got into administration it was just the idea of, "Well, I'd like a little bit more control over what we do." Maybe I'm controlling. I don't know.

From Linda narrative, she became a school principal with the desire to change the way policies or things are done in the school setting to get better results. She cited the example of the punitive discipline and the need to change the way things are done. Her position as the campus leader creates the opportunity for her to make the changes. Linda's past professional and personal experiences in the educational setting, as a teacher, curriculum specialist, professional development specialist, and as a social worker informed her disciplinary practices.

John, the assistant principal of Rover, shared the different experiences that prepared him for his current position.

John – Assistant Principal at Rover High School

John is a Latino male that has served as an assistant principal at Rover high school for the past three years and another school within the district for two years before the current school. He has worked as a teacher and an instructional coach preceding his campus leadership roles. John has served as an educator for a total of ten years. According to John, his interaction with an assistant and associate principals while working as an instructional coach, including the way they interacted with students influenced his decision to become a campus administrator:

"What I found was once I became an instructional coach, I was seeing more of what the administrators did on the campus. I always felt like I understood the big picture, I can grasp big picture very well, but I was having more of the one-on-ones with the principal or an assistant principal or the associate principal, and I was seeing how things were operating." …the first semester where I was fully doing it as an instructional coach and then going to school, I kind of changed. I

was like, "Wait. I like being on the campus. I miss some of that interaction with the kids."

"It kind of and changed what I thought I wanted to do at that point, I quit the math graduate program. As I started a second semester, which was a summer I guess, and in midway through I told myself, "What am I doing?" I started applying for education administration programs.

Unlike Linda and the other two leaders, Albert and Jane, that participated in this study, John worked in the business industry as a sales representative before he became a teacher, instructional coach, and currently an assistant principal. He shared that the sales representative job prepared him and developed his interpersonal relation skills. Below, Albert, an African-American male, the principal of Spark high school shared his narratives, discussed below.

Albert – Principal at Spark High School

Albert is an African-American male with a total of 28 years in public education; eight years as a campus principal at a former school and currently serving in the fourth year on this campus in the same capacity. He worked as a teacher and assistant principal before he became a campus principal. Albert recounts his path to leadership as a result of the frustration he experienced from being unable to defend students mistreated by those in authority:

"I wanted to have the last say as far as what happens with our kids, ultimately. I did not want to be at the campus level overruled when someone did not have a kid's best interest at heart, when he or she wanted to harm a child, or they wanted to prove a point by destroying a child, I had to sit back and just watch. I was told that I am not a principal, so it is not my business, it is not my concern.

I decided I'm going to become a principal, so no other child can be mistreated the way ... I happened to see some children being mistreated and manipulated."

Albert's desire to make changes to the discipline policies used in schools was evident in his narratives. His past experiences witnessing unfair disciplinary decisions and not having the last word to change such decisions was mentioned.

In contrast to the three leaders discussed above, Jane taught in Houston and this created opportunities for her to teach students that are racially diverse.

Jane – Assistant Principal at Spark High School

Jane, a White female, is in her fourth year as an assistant principal. She was a former classroom teacher and a coach. She has been in public education for a total of eighteen years. Jane stated that her path to leadership was due to family time, increased income, and most especially the desire to work with at-risk student population:

"Well, I was teaching and coaching, and coaching takes a lot of your time. Then, I was debating whether or not I wanted to go into counseling, like a crisis counselor, to help people with addiction problems. Then, in that I decided, I need to make money and you're not going to make as much money in that. Being an administrator, I still get to work with kids, and I'm going to see kids who might have some of these issues or behavior problems. Why I've always been drawn to at-risk, I don't know why. I thought I'd just go get my Master's. I knew during the season I would never be at home, and I didn't want to do that to my kids at home, so I went and got my Master's and became an administrator, so I get to deal with everyone."

Jane explained that financial and family time were the other reasons that encouraged her to pursue school administration. The section below highlights the themes that emerged from the participants' responses.

Findings

In the next section, I will discuss the results of the study, addressing each research question. The three themes that emerged from this study are sources of information that inform leaders' sensemaking, factors that inform leaders' actions based on the sense they made, and the actions enacted by school leaders to disrupt racial discipline gap by creating systems and structures to support the reform efforts. Overall, my findings suggest that the way these school leaders' made sense of discretionary discipline, their decisions on how to respond to discipline occurrences, and the different strategies they employed over the years impacted the progress they made in reducing the racial discipline gaps that exists in their DAEP schools. I have organized my research findings according to each research question and the themes associated with each of them.

Research Question One

How do high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?

Leaders' sensemaking sources of information. The participants of this study indicated that they find themselves negotiating contradictions between their beliefs and the discipline practices as they address student discipline and determine consequences. For example, Linda expressed her frustration regarding the three options (ISS, OSS, Expulsion) administrators have to assign consequences to students that are perceived to violate the student code of conduct; and the fact that the three choices are punitive. Other researchers have reported

similar findings (Kennedy, Murphy, & Jordan, 2017). Decisions made by administrators, most often are associated with their background experiences, concerns about lawsuits, and the need to satisfy the demands of students and parents (Kennedy et al., 2017). The theme that emerged from the responses of the school leaders to research question one are sources of data (DAEP and campus climate survey) including discipline policies, professional expectations, and experiences. These sources of information inform leaders's sensemaking about discretionary discipline.

Discretionary DAEP data. An essential source of information that informed the four high school leaders' sensemaking of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP is the longitudinal data report they study each year to monitor discipline gaps as illustrated in Appendix H: Tables H.5 – H.6 which contained the data on the discretionary removal of students to the DAEP from 2011-2015.

Rover high school discretionary DAEP removal data (Table H5) indicated that the African-American students' percent representation amongst those removed to the DAEP from 2011 and 2015 was 0.91%, 2.92%, 0.79%, 0.50%, and 0.52% respectively. Latino/a students' percent representations was 1.31%, 1.28%, 0.82%, 0.11%, and no data was recorded in 2015. Although the data on both the African-American and Latino/a students showed some reductions over the years, the percent representation of both groups of students still showed overrepresentation when compared to their White peers. The percent representation of the White students from 2011 to 2015 was 0.33%, 0.35%, 0.70%, 0.18%, and 0.09%. Similar results were recorded on Spark high school.

Table H6 showed the discretionary DAEP removal data on Spark high school. African-American students' percent representation in removal to the DAEP from 2011 and 2015 was 1.07%, 1.29%, 0.70%, 1.47%, and 0.72% respectively. Latino/a students' percent

representations was 0.28%, 0.68%, 0.67%, 0.27%, and like Rovers high school, there was no data was recorded in 2015. On the other hand, White students' representation from 2011 to 2015 was 0.12%, 1.03%, 0.43%, 0.27%, and 0.13%, which indicates both African-American and Latino/a students were overrepresented.

The leaders of both high schools explained that the data was shared with their teachers as a tool to drive professional developments that focus on racial discipline gaps. The four school leaders indicated the importance of the DAEP data including data on the number of discipline referrals that resulted in assigning students to ISS and OSS in decision making. It informed their sensemaking of discretionary discipline and the actions they took in response to the data. Linda, the principal of Rover high school, mentioned that their discipline data guided their decision-making. Although this study is focused on 2011-2015, Linda expressed her concerns that discipline data on the 2017-2018 school year might show a spike in the number of students removed to the DAEP due to the hostile political environment that spilled into the school, creating tensions that resulted in a couple of fights. Linda stated that:

> "This year has been more contentious than we've had in a while. Our numbers may look different just because when fights have happened, I have said, "They have to go to the DAEP because we are not going to have fights on the campus." With the climate the way it is, that disturbs me quite significantly because I do feel like it's an external influence. I feel like social media is getting worse."

Linda's statement indicates the struggles of the school leaders in maintaining or sustaining the reduction in the racial discipline gaps. Linda shared that a few positive behavior programs were introduced and implemented on their campus in reducing the DAEP removals. Examples of the

programs are peer mediation and creation of more clubs to get all students involved in any one they like and stay connected to the school.

Albert, the principal of Spark High School, shared that his administrative team also monitor the data on the number of discipline referrals acted upon to assign students ISS, OSS, and discretionary removal to the DAEP to inform their decisions. Discretionary removal entails the system the administrative team created to give students a second chance and an opportunity to change their behavior during a probationary 30-day period. According to Albert, most of their students redeem their ways and are retained on the campus as long as they do not violate any student code of conduct.

The two assistant principals of both high schools, Jane and John stated that the district share discipline data during district assistant principal meetings. However, there have been no training or specific directives given to administrators on how to reduce the racial discipline gap. Jane, unlike John, was part of the district team that worked on rewriting the district's student code of conduct in 2014. Jane's perspective regarding discretionary data analysis was different from John's. Interviewing John is important because he represents majority of the district's assistant principals that did not get selected to be part of the few individuals that participated in rewriting the student code of conduct.

John stated: "... I don't even know if they overtly talk about the disproportionate number, but I think it was implied with the information that they're giving you when they give you data, which is true when you see the data." Jane's reaction to the data was:

> "When you start talking about restorative practices and stuff, then you can see how it was disproportionate. It was off. Big time. You don't know until ... We're just looking through our little lens and what I run in this office. When you look at

> it as a whole, you can see where the numbers are. Alarming, I guess you could say, where it's obvious like something has to be done. We've got to change the way we're doing things. We've got to change the way we're doing business with the kids."

It is apparent that although the district shared data with all schools regarding discretionary discipline, campus principals and their administrative team have the sole responsibility to figure out the best ways to reduce the racial discipline gaps. The questionnaire captured other factors that have contributed to how the four school leaders made sense of the disproportionate discretionary DAEP removals of a student of color to the DAEP.

Another source of data mentioned during the interview that informed the principals' actions were responses to the campus climate surveys gathered from teachers, students, and parents regarding school discipline and safety.

Campus climate surveys. Second, another way that the leaders made sense of discretionary discipline racial discipline gaps was partly on their school's campus climate data. Both Linda (principal of Rover) and Albert (principal of Spark) indicated that the respondents that participated in the campus climate surveys conducted the year before they assumed the principalship positions expressed their concerns regarding the disrespect of students towards faculty and staff. Albert stated, "When I looked at the survey that was taken when I first applied for this campus, teachers complained about the students' behavior... Disrespect by students to teachers was high. They would use profanity toward their teachers and just different things like that." Albert expressed that the teachers' report gathered from the survey and when he talked to them gave him some concerns on the type of relationships that existed between the teachers and the students. He stated that he understood that the students' behaviors were due to their inability

to think through situations without getting emotional and it was important that the teachers understood this concept.

Other sources of information that inform the decisions of the participants of this study are the discipline policies, professional expectations, and experiences.

Professional expectations and experiences. The administrators expressed how professional expectations based on the roles they played at various stages of their professional growth shaped their experiences. Each of the leaders used mental maps or schemas to interpret past and present events regarding the discipline of students of color to make sense of the discipline gaps to guide their behavior and actions in reducing the gap. They also discussed the challenges posed by the professional expectations regarding discipline policies. For example, Linda, the principal of Rover high school gave an account how she felt when she started as an assistant principal. She said:

> " I guess, once I became an administrator I felt like, the things we were involved with, I wanted to have more say in how we did things because I feel like a lot of what's done is done because it's been done for a long time but, I don't feel like we look outside the box enough and try new things and different from the way students are discipline."

The subthemes the leaders highlighted as the challenges inherent in their professional expectations and experiences included limited disciplinary actions, teachers' expectations regarding the disciplinary decisions made by administrators, and limited leadership training opportunities.

Exclusionary discipline policies and action codes. As illustrated in Table H.10 (Appendix H), school leaders have limited options regarding the actions they take to address any

violations of the student code of conduct. Students are either removed to the Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) or expelled to the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) depending on the severity of the offense. Actions in the removal of students to the DAEP could be mandatory or discretionary. Other disciplinary options available to administrators are an in-school suspension (ISS) or out-of-school suspension (OSS). All the action codes, mandatory or discretionary involve the exclusion of the student from the source of instruction.

Linda, the principal of Rover, expressed her frustration, she assigned disciplinary actions to students with the limited options given when she was an assistant principal. She stated, "I feel like we have very little at our disposal to use as disciplinary actions that are effective." The disciplinary actions available are punitive, and when acted upon, students get excluded from the instructional environment. Albert, the principal of Spark high school, expressed this concern when he stated that "Discipline should have a result of changing behavior. It just shouldn't be punishment. If it's just punishment, then it's not discipline." The assistant principal of Spark high school, Jane, shared the same views with Albert regarding the punitive nature of the disciplinary actions. She said,

> "You don't give a kid discipline, because you're trying to punish them, your discipline should teach them a lesson that is tied to what they've done in some form or fashion. We're trying to stop that behavior from occurring again. You know? We're not just throwing kids away because they made a mistake. I think we've all made mistakes in our lives. No one threw us away."

The participants' experiences and their sensemaking of what discipline should be conflicts with the state and district discipline policies and what some of the teachers expect when they send an

office referral on a student. The principals also indicated that they feel torn between satisfying the teachers and doing what is right for the students.

The information gathered from the participants showed how they made sense of the racial discipline gap as they navigated the intersection between the reality that the issue is ongoing in schools juxtaposed against the need to disrupt the trend. The sense made by each of these leaders have informed their actions regarding the discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP, which is the second research question discussed below.

Research Question Two

How do high school leaders' sense-making inform their actions regarding the discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?

As the school leaders made sense of discretionary discipline through different data sources and the exclusionary discipline policies, including the professional expectations and experiences, they make decisions on the actions to take in response to the event. The factors that inform the actions of these school leaders are discussed below.

High school leaders' understanding of contextual factors informed by their sensemaking of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP. Leaders' perceptions and their construction of the problem through their sensemaking approaches (Lippa, 2016) contributed to the decisions they made to reduce the racial discipline gaps in the removal of students to the DAEP and offers a better understanding of the inter-related processes of sensemaking and the way problems get constructed individually toward enactment.

The four school leaders' narratives reflected how sensemakers focus on and extract cues from their environment as they go through the sensemaking process (Weick, 1995). Another way the leaders problematized the racial discipline gaps in the discretionary removal of students

to the DAEP was from deficit perspectives and cultural differences. The leaders' sensemaking informed them about the contextual problems that are possible causes of the racial discipline gaps. The issues identified under this theme, the factors that inform the leaders' actions were the teachers' deficit perspectives and cultural misconceptions, the need to preserve students' instructional time, and the need to be student advocates.

Deficit perspectives and cultural misconceptions. The four school leaders that participated in this study discussed how the teachers' deficit perspectives about students and cultural misconceptions often result in punitive responses to behaviors perceived to violate the student code of conduct in traditional school environments. Teachers with deficit mindsetss would most write referrals on students of color. The participants all mentioned the impact of deficit mindset and cultural misconceptions on classroom instruction in both core and elective classes, which affects student achievement.

Linda, the principal of Rover, reflected on how her past experiences as a program director of a school in another school district influenced the actions she took to ensure all students have access to the different programs offered on campus regardless of their race and economic status. According to Linda, Rover high school is very diverse both racially and economically. Students from different ethnic backgrounds, countries, and socioeconomic status attend the school. Linda stated that she had to actively monitor the number of students that enrolled in the different programs to ensure equity. She also looks for ways to fund students that needed instruments or equipment to join the fine arts or athletic classes. It was important to her for every student to feel welcomed and know they belong to the school family.

> "This school is extremely diverse, but with the different programs that we have, we've got all kinds of things. Engineering, Architecture, Construction. We've got

> Law Enforcement, Culinary. I feel like kids have a lot of choices that wouldn't just be driven by how much money you have. I know, like with our Fine Arts programs I've been very sensitive about, if they're being reduced, they shouldn't be kept from these programs because of the cost for band or for a choir. That's something I've monitored and watched to be sure that wasn't happening that kids weren't kept out of things because of the money because I want them to have equal opportunities truly. They deserve that."

As discussed earlier in the data sources section, the racial gaps also exist within the program of study and extracurricular activities students of color have access to on campus. Linda expressed that she monitored the data on course offerings and the access available to students of color.

Albert, the principal of Spark, gave an account of how teachers' deficit mindset and cultural misconceptions create a barrier between the teacher and the students. The teacher's low expectations of the student's behavior interfered with the process the teacher should have taken to determine if the behavior was a direct result of the student's frustration of not knowing what she taught the class. Most students act up when they are embarrassed to express they do not understand what they are taught. Albert term the behavior "avoidance."

> "A lot our kids practice avoidance type behaviors, avoidance type disruptions, and that's one thing we're trying to make sure that we discourage them in doing. Don't use avoidance to cause a discipline issue, when in a sense really you need the help. Talk to your teachers, reach out to your teachers. Tell them, "I don't understand this one, can you help me with this?"

Albert also shared that teachers need to create a classroom environment that is safe for students to make mistakes and ask for help. For students to thrive in this environment, it must be free of deficit mindset, and the teacher must put into consideration the cultural differences within the classroom and how these factors would impact the process of teaching and learning. Albert stated that students should be able to ask other students and teachers for help freely –

> "Can somebody else help me with this one? I'm clueless on this one. If we're honest about it, it's amazing how kids respect you for your honesty. Your peers won't make fun of you, they'll try to help you. There are kids that don't want anyone to know what's going on, their pride is more important than their education. As long as they feel like they really did it, then they're good. Part of our priority is breaking down that mountain of foolishness so they can really be focused on being taught as opposed to avoiding and just trying to make it go away."

As expressed by Albert, there is a need for teachers to create a classroom environment that permits students to make mistakes. Classrooms that permits mistakes embraces a culture of teaching and learning that is free of fear and possibly misconceptions.

John, the assistant principal of Rover high school, recounted how he addressed an issue with a White teacher and two African-American students. He shared that he knew the racial differences created some misunderstandings in the classroom most times. The teacher could not understand why the students acted the way they did and kept writing discipline referrals on them. For the most part, he mediated between them and approached the actions he took on the referrals with a better understanding due to the relationship he had built with the students. John

connected this example to the racial gaps evident in the discretionary removal of students to the DAEP and why educators need to be cognitively aware of there biases regarding the expectations they project to students that could mirror a deficit mindset and what they do not know about their students' cultures that could result in cultural misunderstandings. John stated:

> "Discretionary placements of students of color basically, at a DAEP, I think overall it still feels like cultural responsiveness and understanding of other people's cultures kind of plays into that as well. In that sense, it's not even necessarily about the racial differences, it can be economically, it can even be the gender - male to female, it can be a lot of different things. It is important to kind of understand what's really going on with you as an educator?

Teachers' misconceptions of the different culture or race of their students is another potential cause of conflicts between teachers and students. The relationship administrators build with students help inform their decision making when addressing a discipline referral with the students.

Jane, an assistant principal at Spark, shared her experiences and how she questioned her racial identity and privileges as a White woman in a school she taught in Houston where the students were predominantly black. She learned how important it was for teachers to build the right relationships with students to get them to trust and open up to learn the teacher's subject.

> "I've learned that people really don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. I was raised differently where you just did what you were told to do, and you didn't question, and now it's like you have to listen to students, you have to listen to how they feel. We're just told something, and whether the coach was right or wrong, or the teacher, you just did it. You didn't have a voice.

> Kids have to have a voice. You have to give them an opportunity. There's a lot more things going on in kids' lives today with the social media, it's different."

She also learned how to address the students with respect, thereby preserving their dignity when they made mistakes.

> "In Houston, one of the first lessons I learned that that doesn't work. You cannot get in a kids face, like the way I was coached and stuff. I also learned that not every ... Cultures are different. You cannot ... I think there has to be a streamline, of these are consequences, but I think in the way you get up to explain the consequences or the decisions you make in giving those consequences ... There has to be a different approach. Actually, it's per student, it's not necessarily culture. I do think sometimes ... In Houston, I learned that like that hardcore approach like, "You're going to do what I say." I learned really quick that didn't work. I learned that building relationships with kids first, and then in the event you know if you got to get on to them, be a little tough. You're going to have a much higher success rate than if you just go at them from the beginning."

Differences in culture and misunderstanding of others culture hinders relationship building between educators and students. Behaviors of students of color are usually misinterpreted as rude due to the lack of cultural knowledge of the educators about their students, and vice-versa. Understanding one's culture and that of others creates cultural awareness. The ability of an educator with cultural awareness of their student to incorporate their students' culture in instruction, makes them to be culturally competent. Administrators that are culturally competent must first be aware of their cultural biases and be able to incorporate this knowledge into decision making when addressing student behaviors. The four school leaders' responses

described how they made sense of the discretionary removal of students to the DAEP and how the sense made informed their actions in reducing the numbers of students of color removed disproportionately to the DAEP. The leaders were retrospective as they recounted their experiences, they defined the way disciplinary action plan is socially constructed to be punitive in nature, and they extracted cues from their environment to isolate larger structures that seem to contribute to the racial discipline gap (Weick, 1995). These leaders did not focus on student and family factors that are the typical status quo responses to reasons students of color are disproportionately represented amongst those disciplined, they focused on factors that were within the realm of control of educators and the school system.

The second factor that informed the school leaders that participated in this study was the need to preserve students' instructional time by using non-exclusionary methods to consequence students.

Punitive discipline and loss of instructional time. The four school leaders in this study problematized the discipline gap as a result of the punitive nature of the approaches used. They understood and affirmed that the disciplinary protocol utilized in public schools is punitive. Linda shared her experience as an assistant principal:

> "When I started as an Assistant Principal here, I guess I was frustrated because I feel like ISS takes the kids out of instruction. These are kids that usually are struggling. I really hate it for them to miss instruction. I was always trying to balance discipline and instructional time"

These school leaders opted for different discipline strategies that are restorative and non-punitive. Linda, the principal of Rover HS, explained that she prefers non-punitive disciplinary practices - "the thing I am most interested, right now is the restorative justice and I think I

mentioned to you the TBRI. I really want us to be looking outside of the traditional responses." TBRI is an acronym for Trust-Based Relational Intervention.

She further expressed that the school district did not invest in training their staff in non-punitive and restorative discipline practices. The responsibility to provide professional developments in restorative discipline practices to the staff falls on the campus administrative team. She stated:

> "If we don't train ourselves, I guess it's not going to happen because I don't see the district leading us in a direction. They don't want us to do just discretionary, but then we don't get any, as far as I can tell, tools for, okay so what do we do"?

Albert, the principal of Spark HS, also expressed similar concerns regarding the punitive nature of the disciplinary practices within the school district. However, during the interview, he retrospectively compared the climate and culture of the campus the year he started as a principal to where they are now. From the teachers' perspectives, they could not control the students' behavior and they expect administrators to assign punitive consequences to students. However, Albert was able to change the school culture over time to ensure teachers are respected and at the same time students are treated fairly by teachers.

> "The top priority then was that we had to change the culture of the campus. It had to be changed from no order to discipline. Not discipline in the sense of martial law, but discipline in the sense of what is an expected behavior of a young adult versus the expected behavior of an immature adult. These kids just wanted to be. Wanted to have flexibility to be able to do whatever they wanted to do. They thought being an adult meant you could make whatever decision you want and

that's being an adult. We had to teach them making responsible decisions was being an adult."

The faculty and staff at the time had shallow expectations for the students and allowed them to get away with their behavior. The adults in the building perceived the students as a threat and the fear they showed made the students control the situation. The teachers responded to the students' behavior harshly, and wrote discipline referral for every behavior they perceived as disrespectful and in the process created more friction between them and the students. The students reacted in anger and frustration, and it created the cycle of fear, punitive consequences, and disrespectful reactions. Albert noted that when he heard conversations with the teachers regarding the cycle created, and when he asked them if the students acted in a way that showed they regretted their actions, the teachers responded yes, the students did. Albert's conversation with the teachers was:

"Of those kids that used profanity with you, do they apologize?" "Yeah, 5-10 minutes later, they'll apologize, it was done already, they shouldn't have done it." Well, those kids lacked intellectual capacity, which is the ability to control their emotions."

The teachers, on the other hand, approached the situation from the punitive mindset, they wrote and sent discipline referrals to the administrators to enforce rules. He further stated that once he started having conversations with teachers, and provided professional developments on disciplinary practices and protocols, teachers and students understood behavior expectations over time and he held them accountable appropriately.

The two assistant principals, Jane and John, shared the same concerns regarding the punitive nature of the disciplinary practices. As assistant principals, they deal with discipline on

a daily basis more than the school principals. They both noted the trend seen in their campus discipline data which showed disrespectful behavior was one of the highest numbers of referrals. John discussed the perceptions of the teachers and adults in the building when they make sense of a student's behavior as disrespectful. He stated:

> "I think culture has changed a lot, where it's not acceptable like some of these things of the past that were allowed. I think what we see is, or what I see is, you see a lot of things, oh, that's being disrespectful. Well, they're not necessarily being disrespectful, they're kind of acting maybe how they act at home. They're acting how they see kids act on TV. They're dealing with some kids talking about them on Snapchat, so those things really play a lot in that piece of it having to handle some of those disrespect kinds of things that aren't maybe necessarily disrespectful, but as an adult, they see as more of a disrespect."

Jane affirmed what Albert shared about the need for their admininstrative team to train teachers to start viewing student behavior with a non-punitive mindset and the need to build relationships with the students. She said:

> "Now I'm trying to train the staff. Like, put systems into place, and trainings, such as TBRI, which is Trust-Based Relational Interventions. Helping teachers understand how you can deescalate situations, so kids can stay in class, and can learn. Now it's kind of changed on teaching the staff on how to build better relationships with the kids. Being more proactive instead of reactive, so discipline won't pop up as often."

Jane expressed that the educational era we are now does not support the narrow-minded thoughts of past educators that linked discipline to punishment. She shared how she grew up, and adults were always right

> "… back when I was in school the adult was always right? I don't necessarily agree with that now, from doing this for as long as I've done it. I do think that some situations are handled incorrectly by some adults, by the way they talk to the kids … someone had to teach us, we've got to teach them a better way to handle children who are acting out, or from different cultures or from ... So, it is."

The four school leaders' narratives reflected how sensemakers focus on and extract cues from their environment as they go through the sensemaking process (Weick, 1995). Another way the leaders problematized the racial discipline gaps in the discretionary removal of students to the DAEP was from deficit perspectives and cultural differences.

Leaders' roles as student advocates. The four school leaders indicated that they pursued the principalship position, so they could advocate for students and have some control over how students are treated. The leaders expressed that based on their past experiences, there is a need for them to create disciplinary action systems that contradict the status quo. Linda, Rover high school principal stated that initially, she had no aspiration to become an administrator, she wanted to continue as an instructional coach. However, once she became an administrator, she wanted things done differently to address discretionary discipline.

> "I guess, once I became an administrator I felt like, the things we were involved with, I wanted to have more say in how we did things because I feel like a lot of what's done is done because it's been done for a long time but, I don't feel like we look outside the box enough and try new things and different."

Albert, Spark high school principal, shared that his inability as the assistant principal to make the final decision without the principal's final word concerning student discretionary discipline prompted him to aspire to become a campus principal.

> "I wanted to have the last say as far as what happens with our kids, ultimately. I did not want to be at the campus level overruled when someone didn't have a kid's best interest at heart, when they wanted to harm a child, or they wanted to prove a point by destroying a child. I was told that I'm not a principal so it's not my business, it's not my concern. I decided I'm going to become a principal, so no other child can be mistreated the way ... I happened to see some children being mistreated and manipulated."

Albert stated that this experience influenced the leader he is today. He wants the students to know the adults in the school believes in them and at the same time, he wants the adult to collaborate in teaching the students on how to believe in themselves.

John, assistant principal at Rover high school, expressed that his decision to enroll in the principalship graduate program while he was an instructional coach was due to his observation of school administrators when they addressed student discipline concerns. As an instructional coach, he interacted more with teachers and administrators, but he wanted to have a direct impact on students. John stated that "I like being on the campus. I miss some of that interaction with the kids." It kind of changed my frame of mind about what I thought I wanted to do and become."

Jane, Spark high school assistant principal, related her high school experiences as an athlete with her experience as a teacher and a coach. She expressed that during her high school days, coaches yelled and paddled students. Although the current school disciplinary actions do not permit paddling as a form of discipline, many coaches and administrators yell at students to

impose a form of control. Jane stated that her experiences as a teacher and coach of students from diverse backgrounds and cultures gave her a better understanding of how to communicate with students of color. According to Jane, one of the first lessons she learned at the school she taught in Houston was to not get into a student's face as a coach. She stated that:

> "You cannot get in a kid's face, like the way I was coached and stuff. I also learned that cultures are different. You cannot, I think these consequences have to be rationalized. I think in the way you get up to explain the consequences or the decisions you make in giving those consequences. There has to be a different approach."

The four school leaders recognized that to advocate for students; they must form and establish the right relationships with each student.

Research Question Three

What do high school leaders do to prevent the disproportionate representation of students of color amongst those removed discretionally to the DAEP?

Based on the responses of the school leaders to first and second research questions, it is evident that they enact their sensemaking to describe their approaches to discipline. They indicated their shared understandings and beliefs of the punitive nature of public school discipline policies and they described the role race plays in the racial discipline gaps through the lens of cultural misconceptions. The leaders also expressed how their efforts to build and cultivate relationships with teachers, students, and parents contributed to their success in reducing the racial discipline gaps in the discretionary removal of students to the DAEP. To answer research question 3, the analysis below highlights third commom theme that emerged in this study – actions enacted by school leaders to sirupt racial discipline gap.

High school leaders' actions to prevent the disproportionate representation of students of color removed discretionally to the DAEP. The principals' shared their beliefs and the actions they took to reduce the overrepresentation of students of color removed to the DAEP for discretionary reasons. The first commonly held belief of these administrators is that the traditional public school punitive approach to discipline consequences is not an effective way to create learning opportunities for the student to reflect on and change the unacceptable behavior. The section below discuss how the leaders used sensemaking to inform their actions. The three actions that emerged under these third theme were providing teachers professional development that focus on cultural competency, implementing campus-wide behavioral intervention and support programs, including hiring specific staff members, and encouraging relationship building amongst stakeholders.

Professional growth in cultural competency and initiatives enacted. According to the shared experiences of the school leaders that participated in this study, they had limited professional development opprtunities provided by the school district that focused on cultural competencies. The school leaders expressed that their professional growth experiences regarding the differences in culture and how these plays out in the classroom were accumulated over the years of service.

Albert's version of his professional growth experiences as an African-American school principal was:

> "My professional development was from books I read, you know, classroom discipline. Other books such as The Power of Their Own Ideas. There have been numerous books that I have read that talks about overcoming poverty, children of poverty, but I also have my own personal, professional development that I've

learned in my life, that has helped me to really understand that no one gave up on me. Well, I won't say that. A couple of people refused to give up on me when everybody else said there was no hope."

Jane, a White female, assistant principal of Spark high school, expressed that her first exposure to professional growth on cultural understanding was when she taught in Houston in a school that comprised predominantly African-American students in 2011. She, however, had the opportunity to discuss the issue on racial discipline gap when she was nominated by the district to work with other school and district leaders to rewrite the student code of conduct. After which she could not clearly state precisely when assistant principals held such conversation with during district meetings. Although the district share the data, the assistant principals across the district do not engage in indepth conversations around racial discipline gaps. Jane stated that the administrators on her campus talk about it during their leadership or administrative meetings.

"I think ... I don't know if you'd consider it PD, but I know that in our admin meetings it's talked about in the district admin meetings it's always brought to our attention. We discuss, "How are you handling the situation? How did that work for you when you did that with ...?

John, the assistant principal of Rover high school also affirmed what Jane's statement about the limited professional development regarding racial discipline gaps with minimal discussion of the issue.

Both Linda and Albert provided opportunities for their assistant principals and teachers to attend various professional developments to address the lack of sufficient sources of professional growth in the issue of race-linked with discipline and learning. These training create a forum for

the entire school to have discussions that focus on racial discipline gaps as a result of the overrepresentation of students of color amongst those with discipline referrals.

Linda shared that they have a professional development committee at Rover high school and their primary objective is to gather feedback from the teachers and staff to decide on the professional development that is needed. She stated: "We have a PD committee, to help guide decisions on professional developments that will meet the needs of the staff."

A few examples of the professional development opportunities both Linda and Albert made available to their staff, assistant principals and teachers, are Restorative Discipline, Implicit Bias, Capturing Kids' Hearts, and Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI).

Campus-wide positive behavioral intervention and support programs; and hiring of staff. Both school principals and their teams took alternative approaches by implementing different positive behavioral intervention and support (PBIS) programs that recognize students for good behavior or academic achievements. Rover high school administrative team, hired behavior specialist and social worker to support student behavior. Both schools implement Restorative Discipline Practices that allow students involved in an infraction to sit in circles to discuss, reflect on their actions and that of the other person, and apologize for the roles they played to hurt the other person.

Another initiative both schools utilize to encourage positive behaviors on and off campus is the weekly social media tips that are presented to students and sent via school messenger to parents. The social media tips are put together by the Instructional Technology Support Staff (ITSS). The leadership team of both schools also incorporated other programs and activities that support and encourage positive behaviors.

Rover high school: campus-wide positive behavior intervention and support programs; and hiring of staff. Linda and her administrative team hired a Behavioral Specialist. The role of the behavioral specialist included observing the interactions between teachers and students in the classroom setting. The specialist then provides feedback to the teachers on how they responded, escalated or de-escalated situations based on the data collected in the classroom observed, and also provide suggestions on how the teacher can manage the situation with the particular student when the event occurs again. From Linda's perspective, the behavioral specialist help the teachers become better at dealing with behavior, so they do not escalate. Linda expressed that most of the students teachers had issues with were students of color. The behavior specialist have worked in Title I schools with students of color and understood the need to form relationships with them. The behavior specialist connect with teachers that have difficulty understanding students of color and consistently write office discipline refferals on them. The behavior coach observe both the teacher and the student in the classroom setting and give feedback to the teacher including strategies on how to relate with the students. Linda stated:

> "a teacher can request for the behavioral specialist to observe a student in their classroom and an AP can refer a teacher or a student, he will go in, and he'll observe that teacher and how they implement their behavior management, then he coaches them and talks to them about how they could've de-escalated instead of escalated the situation."

Linda proactively hired a social worker as a part-time staff from the state's at-risk funds allocated to the campus. Linda's rationale for hiring was for the social worker to work with students, most especially the frequent fliers and those referred by the school academic counselors for emotional support. Other reasons expressed by Linda included the importance of teaching

Rover high school students' social skills that involve anger management and conflict resolution. As well as the fact that academic counselors have many responsibilities related to the academic progress of the students. The academic duties take away from the time counselors provide to a student or groups of students to meet their emotional needs before, during, or after a crisis occurs; especially students that get frequent discipline referrals. Linda said:

> "My vision was because the counselors don't seem to have time to do group sessions or individual sessions and I really wanted somebody who could come in and do social skills, who could do anger management, conflict resolution, these kinds of training... Train students, give them skills that they don't have.
>
> I felt we would start with our frequent fliers because if we want them not to continually get into trouble, this revolving door, going to the DAEP or they're the ones that are going to be OSS-ed. We must change behavior first."

Linda and her team of administrators, the behavioral specialist, and the social worker including the faculty staff established peer mediation and conflict resolution groups amongst students. The adults trained the students on how to implement the processes involved. The faculty and staff monitored the students that facilitate each session.

A program the administrative team at Rover high school implemented was Rachel's Challenge, an inspirational outreach program that was established by Rachel Joy Scott's parents. Rachel was one of the victims of the Columbine High School shooting that took place in 1999. The outreach program, run by Rachel's families and friends, focuses on creating a chain of reaction of kindness to make schools safer by replacing bullying and violence with kindness. The Rachel's Challenge team gave a presentation to students, parents, faculty and staff, and other school and district community member that attended the program. According to Linda,

> “Rachel's Challenge sponsors work with some of our group of kids, which we would want a diverse group of kids. We don't want just student council kids or National Merit or National Honor's Society. We want a real mix of kids so that they all have a voice. They come together with the sponsors and they're going to determine what the project is that the school will focus on for addressing our Rachel's Challenge.”

Spark high school: campus-wide positive behavior intervention and support programs. Albert and his leadership team in collaboration with the teachers implement the “Get the POINT” program. P.O.I.N.T represents Pride, Perseverance, Ownership, Intellectual Capacity, Nobility, and Teamwork. Teachers nominate students based on the qualities the student exhibits and parents are invited to celebrate their students. The recognition ceremony takes place every six weeks on a school day at different times by grade levels. Albert expressed that when he realized teachers became stringent in nominating students, he addressed the issue with them. He expressed that an African-American female student, in her senior year, with no referrals, straight A’s, enrolled in mostly Advanced classes asked him why she was not nominated. He was surprised as well, and this prompted him to have the conversation below with his teachers.

> “Last year, we only had 800 kids nominated out of 2,500. In my faculty meeting, I asked the question, "Why is only 800 kids nominated. This is for kids who Get the POINT. We don't have 1,700 with referrals. Why are they not nominated?"

The teachers responded, "Well, Mr. Albert if we nominate everybody, it doesn't matter. We're just watering it down.

Albert's response to the teachers to clear their misconceptions regarding the main point of the program was "You don't get it. It's not watering it down, it's telling a great kid 'we see you, we acknowledge you'."

The section below discuss the second shared belief of the four school leaders on the need to provide professional growth opportunities to their staff on cultural competency.

Building and cultivating relationships. The third common belief amongst the four high school leaders is the importance of forming and cultivating relationships. Teacher-student, administrator-teacher, and administrator-student-parent relationships were the three subthemes that emerged from the analysis of the responses gathered from the participants.

Teacher-student relationship. Relationships formed between teachers and students can determine the classroom climate and the effectiveness of the classroom management employed by the teacher.

Linda explained that it is crucial for teachers to understand that they should not make assumptions that all students know how to behave the way the teacher expects them. The teachers need to teach and model the expected behavior.

> "That's the thing too is the idea that you teach behavior, not to have assumptions that they all know. Yeah, I know they're 16, 17, 18, that doesn't mean they know to behave this way. They've learned different ways. You can teach how to behave, but you have to model it first. That idea that a lot of kids get really hung up on respect, 'I'm not giving it if I don't get it.' They will if you approach things really calmly, kids usually feel respected."

John gave an account of an incident that happened between a teacher and a student. The student laid his head on his desk and refused to get work done. The student got mad at the

teacher when redirected, and the teacher sent an office discipline referral. When called to the office, the student explained to John the challenges his family had. He gave consequences for the disrespect to the teacher but encouraged the student to apologize to the teacher the next day and share his experience with the teacher. The teacher came back to John to express that he was worried about the student and he hopes the student would not drop out of school. John's response to the teacher was:

> "Exactly! You need to build relationships with students as an educator. Try and make sure he stays on this side of the road and not on the other. The reality of it is you're building that relationship. You're understanding more what that kid's doing and why."

Jane and Albert also agreed that teachers need to build the right relationships with students to show that they care about them and give the students a reason to listen and engage in the teaching-and-learning process.

Administrator-teacher relationship. Apart from the professional development opportunities provided to teachers by administrators, it is vital for them to have a good working relationship and a clear understanding of expectations. Majority of the discretionary discipline referrals originate from teachers in the classroom. Usually, students of color are overrepresented amongst those referred for disciplinary consequences for behaviors perceived to violate the student code of conduct and. For this reason, the high school leaders that participated in this study provided in-service training and paid for outside professional development opportunities on cultural responsiveness and competency.

Albert and Jane expressed that they went over the different levels of infractions with the teachers at Spark high school and gave examples of each level. Teachers are expected to address

level one infractions in the classroom. They are also expected to have had a conversation with students the first time it occurs, contacted parents about the behavior concerns before the referral stage. Also, once the teachers send the referrals, the disciplinary decision made is at the discretion of the assistant principal. Jane stated:

> "Teachers are given examples, like, these are the level one, these are things that you should be handling in your classroom. We shouldn't be seeing referrals for, "Johnny didn't bring a pencil." Well, that's a level one, that's Tier one. They also understand that they must document, they also understand that they can call for support if it's a code red like a fight, or a theft, or something that needs immediate attention, such as, say a kid might be under the influence, or maybe you have something on them they shouldn't. Those are things we deal with immediately."

Linda, principal of Rover high school shared the convesration she had with her teachers in 2015, three years ago regarding the need for the teachers to be part of the non-punitive disciplinary process on their campus. She stated:

> "The idea is we want teachers to understand, they have a role in this, and can de-escalate issues. I feel like they are doing that more. That's got to be part of ... Because just our discipline referrals have gone down significantly. I think part of it is trying to empower the teachers to handle this. We try to train them too. About three years ago, I was trying to say, "You all, there's seven of us. There's 200 of you, there's 2800 of kids, we can't fix everybody. We don't have any magic dust to sprinkle on them. When they come to our office, we send the same kid back to you, it's not a different kid. We have no magic."

Linda's also shared her view that the relationship teachers build with students is very important.

> "We've really emphasized relationship building. Get to know the kids. That goes so far. There's a lot that we've worked with the teachers through the behavior ... Getting that committee was really the whole idea with a lot of behavioral trainings, through the committee, they've presented several times over the last three years to the teachers about behavioral management, about dealing with students."

Administrator-student-parent relationship. The four high school leaders highlighted the importance of building and maintaining the right relationships with students and parents to get their support when they need to make difficult and inevitable decisions relating to discipline. Linda's perspective on relationship building with students reads:

> "… for me I feel like, from my background I know it's very important to develop relationships with the kids that we're working with. I feel like we have very little at our disposal to use as disciplinary actions that are effective."

However, Linda's perspective of administrator-parent relationship building indicated the challenges her campus administrators encounter with parents that push back on the disciplinary actions assigned to their students for a misbehavior.

> "Parents pushback don't want their kid in trouble for anything. If they would address the problems that we had early on, we wouldn't get to the point of a lot of issues, I truly feel, but because of the way things are happening these days, it's hard. They don't understand how lucky they are that we are trying to be resourceful and think outside the box because it takes time and effort and it's

> frustrating, especially when we get pushback from the teachers feeling like we're not doing anything."

Linda's frustration to maintain a good relationship with all stakeholders was expressed. She chose to explore alternative ways to reduce the number of students removed to the DAEP by putting systems and structures in place to encourage student positive behavior. Linda stated:

> "Yeah, there's this balance that's very difficult to keep. That's why I'm trying to build systems by doing these other things that circumvent, that would proactively, hopefully, diminish the number of, just in general, misbehaviors that you would end up getting referrals for that would add up to the point that perhaps someday we could get to where the behavioral specialist or whoever has time just to have classes for those few kids that need the classes."

Some of the systems and structures referred to in Linda's statement are the Positive Behavioral Programs and targeted professional developments opportunities offered to teachers, including peer mediation, and Rachel's Challenge.

Also, Albert expressed that as school leaders, it is necessary to ask some questions and follow the order of the questions before making a decision to remove a student to the DAEP. The questions he posed were student-centered and only administrators that have established a form of administrator-student, and administrator-parent relationships would take the final action. The administrator must have had conversations with student and parent, and then create and implement action plans before making the decision to remove the student to the DAEP. Albert's statement during the interview reads:

> "If a child is not here, we can't teach them. That's the first thing I've come to understand. If we banish them to the DAEP, and they're gone for 90 days, 120

> days, often we could do that. Then, what type of education are these kids really receiving? If we get rid of them for 45 days, they're not here, but what have they missed, and how can they make it up, and what deficit do they have to overcome? I've learned how to breathe, not make emotional decisions. We have to really look at what was done that caused the discretionary piece. What have we done to work with their parents? What have we done to inspire their kids? What have we done to try to put them in a position where they can be successful? If all of these question boxes are checked, and all the things were done, and a child still was not successful, then that child has a consequence that they have to adhere to."

Albert's statement above explains why his administrative team created an additional step to the discipline policy on the discretionary removal of students to the DAEP. When a decision is made by the administrative team to remove a student to the DAEP for the discretionary offense, a student-parent conference is held to discuss the terms of the removal. Albert's team introduced a probationary 30-day period or differed adjudication to monitor a student on campus as a way to give a second chance as opposed to removing the student to the DAEP. Any other offense within the 30 days will result in automatic removal to the DAEP.

Albert described the process of deferred adjudications as "… is trying to habilitate them, give them an opportunity to change before they have a consequence they have to be rehabilitated from. Some people don't understand that, but it's okay."

Albert and Jane affirmed that parents work well with them due to the relationship they form with them. Parents rarely push back when they finally get to the point where the student needs to be removed to the DAEP since the parents have been part of the discussion and probationary plans. Albert's explanation of the process and parents' reactions:

> "Luckily for us, a lot of our kids, in the process of intervening before the removal, they have started to improve. The way they look at their life, and the way they look at this campus, and they are at least trying to do what we required and ask of them. Our parents appreciate it because they do know that we're reaching. They do know that a challenge has been given, and they do realize that their kids have to do their part. It has taught me how to give discipline with dignity, but how to restore kids before you just bury a kid. Sometimes that child has to go."

Alber further explained that some parents do not agree with decisions to remove their students to the DAEP. He however focus on how to get those parents' supports in the process.

> "Sometimes parents disagree, that's okay too, they have their right as a parent, but that's not going to change our decision, but it will give us something to think about how they can become better supporters and partners with us going forward."

Albert also shared his discipline philosophy to discipline students but respect and preserve their dignity.

> "In every kid's life, I'm going to be that one of the two that won't give up on a kid. Even if I give a kid discipline, I'm not giving up on them, I'm just holding them accountable for what they have failed to do, and the expectation that they are supposed to meet. I call it to discipline with dignity. I call it teaching them how to navigate the waters, how to keep from hitting the icebergs. Teach them, not tolerate them so they can all learn to really believe in not only themselves but the system that they're subject to on a daily basis."

Jane, the assistant principal at Spark, affirmed that discipline issues on their campus improved each year under Albert's leadership. She said,

> "I've seen a big change in the past what, three or four, three years? When we had a change in leadership on our campus when one of our ... Our new Principal's very restorative, and he's continuously ... He models what we should be. I've seen a big change in that, with giving kids ... Building better relationships, minimizing reoccurrences of certain behaviors, so I would say within the past three years. It's getting better every year."

Another common practice Linda and Albert shared was the opportunity they give to parents and students to negotiate the assigned number of days during the DAEP removal meeting. Both leaders expressed that the rationale was to reduce the number of days the student spend outside of the traditional instructional setting.

Chapter Summary

The four high school leaders made sense of the racial discipline gap inherent in the discretionary removal of students to the DAEP by drawing from their past and current institutional contexts. They expressed common understandings and beliefs of the punitive nature of the discipline policies and suggested that race and culture could potentially exercebate the racial discipline gap through the lens of cultural misconceptions. The leaders understand that most educators were trained with the punitive model mindset and most of the teachers in turn implement the same punitive discipline practices.

While these leaders share beliefs about the deficit perspectives many teachers and other staff members held about students of color, their approach to effect change in reducing the overrepresentation focus on the teachers and the various support systems they can provide to

teachers to facilitate the change. In the next chapter, the leaders gave an account of the changes they made through the actions they put in place to achieve the reductions shown in the data from 2011-2015, and to date.

Chapter Five

Discussion

In this chapter, I present the interpretation of the findings, a description of the study limitations, recommendations for future research, and the implications of this study. The purpose of this study was to examine how high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEPs and the actions they employed to reduce the overrepresentation of students of color. The sensemaking theory (Weick, 1995) is used to frame this study conceptually. The seven important tenets of sensemaking used to analyze this study are grounded in identity construction, retrospect, cues, plausibility, enactment, social contact, and ongoing events. Four administrators, two principals, and two assistant principals, one of each from both campuses of study participated in this research.

Data were collected using in-depth interviews, observations, and reviewed documents. A qualitative approach was employed through a phenomenological study to examine the phenomenon of school leaders' sensemaking of discretionary discipline and their actions. The purposive sampling method was used to select the participants, a campus principal and an assistant principal from each of the two high schools, Rover and Spark, four participants total.

The findings of this study indicate the leaders make sense of discretionary discipline and the racial discipline gap through different data sources such as their campus DAEP data and the climate survey. According to the campus principals of Rover and Spark, their campus climate survey was the instrument used to gather information and hear from teachers, students, and parents. Other sources of information that influenced their sensemaking of discretionary discipline and racial gap are their professional and personal experiences. Additionally, different factors such as the teachers' misconceptions and their expectations of administrators; need to

preserve instructional time, and the leaders' desire to advocate for students inform the actions they take in response to their sensemaking of discretionary racial discipline gap. Lastly, the key findings reveal the actions enacted by the school leaders through the systems and structures they put in place to disrupt the racial discipline gap.

Interpretation of the Findings

In this section, I will interpret the results of the study in comparison to the literature review specifying in what ways the findings substantiate, refute, or enhance knowledge within this discipline. The following research questions guided this study:

1. How do high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?
2. How do high school leaders' sense-making inform their actions regarding the discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?
3. What do high school leaders do to prevent the disproportionate representation of students of color amongst those removed discretionally to the DAEP?

The results of the study revealed three emergent themes, one for each research question. The first theme, factors that inform leaders' actions, consist of two codes, the second theme is made up of three codes, while the third theme consists of three codes. I discussed the interpretation of each theme, and their codes in chronological order. Additionally, I then discussed an interpretation of the findings for the seven tenets of the sensemaking theory following the most associated theme.

High school leaders' sensemaking of discretionary removal to the DAEP. The findings indicate the attempts made by the school leaders to disrupt the racial discipline gap associated with the discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP. The participant's

past experiences, professional and personal, influenced their non-punitive discipline approach. Their experiences shaped their relational leadership orientation which in turn influenced their approach to discretionary discipline. The codes or the foundational components of the factors that inform the leaders are the personal and professional backgrounds of the leaders, and the different sources of data (DAEP discipline data and climate survey) the leaders use to inform their sensemaking. Each of the school leaders' experiences shaped and informed their sensemaking and these includes the different roles they have held in education. Linda is a White female, the principal of Rovers high school, served as a teacher, counselor, assistant and associate, principal, before she became a campus principal. She worked in schools that comprised mainly low socioeconomic and students of color. Albert, an African- American male, the principal of Spark high school, worked and still serves schools thate are classified as in low socioeconomic and still does. These schools comprise of higher percentages of students of color. John, Latino male, assistant principal, worked in the corporate industry as a sales representatitive before he became a teacher, then an assistant principal. Jane. White female, assistant principal, worked in a low socioeconomic school in Houston ISD the first few years of her career as an educator and the school comprise mainly African-American students. Consistent with the empirical literature, the DAEP data of the campuses of the leaders participating in this study showed the overrepresentation of students of color the data (CDF, 1975; DeMatthews, 2016a; Fenning & Rose, 2007; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). The leaders' sensemaking of discretionary discipline to remove students of color to the DAEP is grounded in their identity construction and focused on the different cues they extract from the past and current event they are evaluating.

Grounded in identity construction. Identity construction was central to the participants of this study. As stated by Karl Weick, "sensemaking begins with the sensemaker" (p. 18); and the foundational principle of the sensemaking theory is the ability of an individual to be able to critically examine and know oneself. Identity, in the context of a school leader, relates to the manner in which the leader defines his or her role in the school environment. The development of an individual's self-identity is significantly determined by their responsibilities (Salazar, 2013; Weick, 1994). Identity is therefore connected to a person's (or group's) sense of who they are in a situation or setting; and the resources available to augment an "effectual" sense of self (Clegg & Bailey, 2008, p. 1403). The findings of my study support this through the participants' account of their awareness of self as administrators. All four participants identified as relational leaders, and they rely heavily on the relationships they build with all stakeholders.

School leaders' skills acquired throughout their profession and the interactions they have with other educators, students and parents impact how they continuously construct their identity. Examples of the experiences and interactions that redefine identity which effects our worldview cited by Helms Mills et al. (2010) were: parents, friends, religion, schools attended, workplace, and job responsibilities (p. 184). The participants expressed that their professional and personal experiences informed their actions in striving to build the right relationships. Their identity construction was centered around relationship building. Linda, the principal of Rover high school stated "Well, for me I feel like, from my background I know it's very important to develop relationships with the kids that we're working with."

Albert, the principal of Spark high school affirms the importance of forming the right relationships and its importance in his role as a campus principal. He said:

> "The experience that I acquired from previous schools shaped my leadership here, the experiences I've had at all of my schools really have been relationship oriented with our kids. You can't teach them until they know you care about them. That has been my philosophy ever since I started in education."

The two assistant principals, John and Jane, of each high school that participated in this study also emphasized they view their roles as relationship builders. Jane's comment on relationship was "I think that relationship building is the most important thing, and what I have found when I coached, and now as an administrator, it's way more effective with letting them know you care about them." Weick's sensemaking tenet of identity construction gives an insight on the research result through its emphasis on the subjective nature of the sense made by an individual. In this study, the participants' sense of self has been greatly influenced by their professional and personal experiences.

The school leaders deep understanding of who they were as individuals and the experiences that shaped their identity construction. They also embraced characteristics that informed their relational leadership orientation. With a clear understanding of self and that of their campuses, participants identified the needs of their campuses regarding the racial discipline gap.

Focused on and extracted by cues. The findings indicate that the participants of this study extracted cues from daily personal and professional experiences, which in turn, influenced their national perspective on the racial discipline gap. By activating experiential knowledge and collecting both formal and informal data, the school leaders generated reference points which served as guideposts that shaped their racial discipline gap perspectives and subsequently informed their relational leadership orientation. According to Weick (1995) "extracted cues are

simple, familiar structures that are seeds from which people develop a larger sense of what may be occurring" (p. 50). Extracted cues are fundamental, familiar structures that are the sources from which an individual makes sense of what is happening (Weick, 1995). The participants of this study discussed how they extracted cues from their discussions with teachers which informs them of the teachers' cultural incompetency and the need to provide them training on racial discipline gaps.

> "There was a lot of escalations because teachers aren't trained for that kind of thing. Teachers, really, are not trained to de-escalate, as the kid goes higher, you go lower. The teachers go off as well. Or they would just let it go. You don't have to let it go, it's a teaching moment. That's the thing too is the idea that you teach behavior, not to have assumptions that they all know. Yeah, I know they're 16, 17, 18, that doesn't mean they know to behave this way. They've learned different ways. You can teach how to behave, but you have to model it first. That idea that a lot of kids get really hung up on respect, 'I'm not giving it if I don't get it'. Having to ... If you approach things really calmly, kids usually feel respected."

Linda further discussed other cues they gathered from interacting with teachers that informed the decisions the administrative made to provide trainings to the teachers. She mentioned that teachers' actions or reactions to students that indicates they are accusing the students have also triggered infractions in the classroom. Therefore, there is a need to equip the teachers by providing the training on cultural competency. Linda stated:

> "If you approach students accusatorily or aggressively, that sets them off right away. We still have teachers that have trouble with that. The idea is we want them to understand, you have a role in this, you can de-escalate. I feel like they are

doing that more. That's got to be part of ... Because just our discipline referrals have gone down significantly. I think part of it is trying to empower the teachers to handle this. We try to train them too."

These findings substantiate the need for school leaders to be attuned to their campus climate and culture, monitor the patterns that are evident in their discipline data as these interpretations inform leadership and shape actions.

High school leaders' understanding of contextual factors informed by their sensemaking of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP. The findings indicate the school leaders consider various factors when making decisions. The codes or foundational components of this second theme are the different factors that inform the leaders' actions. Examples of these are the teachers' cultural misconceptions and misunderstandings, and the punitive consequences they expect the administrators to always assign students. Other factors the leaders consider, according to the findings of this study are the need to preserve the instructional time when they address student behavior in an effort to maintain a safe environment and at the same time advocate for the students. As advocates, the leaders consider the students life outside of school, which for the most part ignored by teachers unintentionally, previous disciplinary records, the students' motive, and the cognitive level of the student. In addition, the school leaders consider the contextual and environmental factors such as location, time and location the event took place, presence or level of adult supervision of students, and the presence of any witness or instigator. The findings of this study indicate that the sensemaking of the participants through retrospective processes, is ongoing, and it is driven by plausibility rather than accuracy as they take actions in an effort to disrupt the racial discipline gap in discretionary removal of students to the DAEP.

Retrospective. The school leaders constantly engage in fact-finding through a dual retrospective process as they make sense of the evidence gathered from the sources of information and at the same time generate connections from previous events. This dual recursive cycle informed the school leaders' understanding of both the past and present occurrences, which provides insight and subsequently informed their decision making. This confirm that the creation of sense is an "attentional process" (Weick, 1995, pg. 25) to an event that already took place. "Actions are known only when they have been completed, which means we are always a little behind or our actions are always a bit ahead of us" (Weick, 1995, pg. 26).

The process of sensemaking is influenced by how far an individual can recall an occurrence and how well they remember the details (Clegg & Bailey, 2008). School leaders consistently draw from past experiences to make discretionary decisions regarding student discipline. The experiences an individual chooses to recall, refer to, or emphasize, provide better understanding into his or her belief system (Weick, 1995). The participants practice retrospection on a daily basis and even during the interview process as they responded to the questions and draw from their past experiences. School leaders investigate an incident as they receive discipline referrals through the question strategies they employ, listening, and the synthesis of the information they gather from different students, teachers, and parents.

Lynda described her thought porcess when she address a discipline referral with a student. She shared that she thinks through the essence of the consequence and if sending the student home was a reasonable consequence based on her experience. She knows the students most likely would like it and sending them home reinforces the behavior, which would be conterproductive to the desired effect of discipline. She stated "I feel ISS is not very useful.

Sending them home, again, well that's great. They love that. Then, they're not supervised. My personal feeling was we need to be proactive."

Albert's thought process as he addresses discipline based on his past experiences is expressed in this statement:

> "Holding kids accountable is what makes them better people. How you hold them accountable is key to them continuing to be encouraged to keep trying. My experiences led me to believe that if I do not destroy a child while I'm correcting them, and that child still has hope because they don't lose face and they're not confused as to how to continue. Students that are embarrassed and hurt, disappear on you."

Jane also shared how she thinks about the way she grew up and the way discipline was handled back then. She expressed that the questions she usually asks herself each time she is addressing a discipline issue is "how can we reach the kids? That's the ultimate thing." She further stated

> "You don't give a kid discipline, because you're trying to punish them, your discipline should teach them a lesson that is tied to what they've done in some form or fashion. We're trying to stop that behavior from occurring again. You know? We're not just throwing kids away because they made a mistake. I think we've all made mistakes in our lives. No one threw us away."

John draws from his past experiences and stated that he takes the time to remind himself to always think through the context of the issue and understand the background of the students and teacher that are having the conflict. He stated, "I think understanding where people come from and having those conversations of like, Okay. You did this, but why?"

The retrospective principle of Weick's sensemaking theory is crucial. It is only after the occurrence of an event that we process reflect upon and process what took place (Weick, 1995). The retrospective sensemaking tenet informs understanding of the research result by highlighting how the high school leaders are constantly gathering information, making "sense of" the information they gathered, and how they use the information they made "sense of "to "make sense of the bigger picture." Therefore, Weick's retrospective tenet applied to this study informs school leaders of the inherent subjectivity and human vulnerability connected to the actions they take to respond to the situation.

Ongoing. School leaders continuously engage in sensemaking as they address student behaviors that are perceived to violate the student code of conduct. The participants of this study consistently collected discipline data on their campuses, analyze it, made connections to their past and current realities, shared with their staff. Also, they constantly revised the actions they take and came up with different strategies, such as the hiring of a behavioral specialist, in an effort to disrupt the racial discipline gaps. These findings validate Weick's claims that "sensemaking never starts. The reason it never starts is that pure duration never stops. People are always in the middle of things, which become things, only when those same people focus on the past from some point beyond it" (1995, pg. 43).

Individuals are continually going through the process of sensemaking to understand what is going on around them (Weick, 1995). Sensemaking never starts; a pure duration of start-to-finish eover occurs because people are perpetually in the middle of things (Weick, 1995 p. 43). The four school leaders expressed that the administrative team meet on a regular basis to think through discipline referrals to maintain checks and balances and fairness in decision making. An example given by Linda was:

> It's talking through the discipline issues that come up. We talk about, "Should we send students to the disciplinary alternative school?" We have that discussion. If the AP and I say, "I don't know, what do you think?" Sometimes we say, "Well, let's talk about it with the bigger group." We'll have the deeper conversation. I think that helps us a lot because we brainstorm together, we collaborate and we respect one another's opinion. Sometimes somebody thinks of something that we really haven't thought of and it's like, "Oh, you're right. Yeah, that's something to consider."

The participants of this study continously engaged in the process of addressing discipline referrals. They are constantly thinking about the best way they can maintain discipline and at the same time create a conducive learning environment.

Driven by plausibility rather than accuracy. The findings show that school leaders, as disciplinarian, investigate a situation to get the truth. However, accuracy is not always possible due to the different factors that surrounds every occurrence, including the school leaders' perceptions. The inability to be 100 percent accurate in getting the truth forces school leaders to settle for plausible rather than accurate outcomes (Banks, 2018). From the participants' accounts, they investigate to get the truth to make fair decisions in the best interest of their students and provide clear and detailed explanations to parents to support the disciplinary actions they assigned the student. These leaders explained that the trusting relationship they build with students and parents gave them a leverage to have the conversation with minimal pushbacks. The investigative process requires administrators to gather and process as much information as possible until the "balance tips" in one direction or another. The process of sensemaking does not depend on accuracy; alternatively, it relates to "plausibility, pragmatics, coherence,

reasonableness, creation, invention and instrumentality" (Weick, 1995, p. 56). The most relevant characteristic of this sensemaking tenet is that "sensemaking is not about truth and getting it right," but it is about the continued "redrafting of an emergency story so that it becomes more comprehensive, incorporates more of the observed data, and is more resilient in the face of criticism (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstefld, 2005, p. 415). The participants of this study shared why the investigative process in discretionary discipline is very essential. Students, teachers, administrators, and teachers usually have viewpoints that differ most times when a discipline infraction takes place. School leaders employ multiple investigative techniques in an attempt to determine the truth to assign a fair consequence.

John, the assistant principal of Rover high school shared his experience with a teacher and student. The teacher wrote up the student because the student slept in class. The student disrespected the teacher and teacher called for the student to be removed from the class. Through Johns investigation, the student shared the challenges his family was going through and how he had to work double shifts to support his mom to pay bills because his father walked out on them. The student reflected on his reaction towards the teacher and promised to meet with the teacher the next day to apologize. John mediated between the teacher and the student. The teacher later admitted to John that he felt bad for not giving the student a chance. John's description of his conversation with the teacher is as follows:

> "He said, "In that conversation, though, he really shared a lot with me of what's going on outside of school." He's like, "It's not good." He's like, "It's a track that he needs to stay away from. I don't know if his family or friends are kind of going down this road, and he's on the periphery right now, and he really could go either way."

“I'm like, exactly. You need to build a relationship with the student. You're an educator. Try and make sure he stays on this side of the road and not on the other The reality of it is you're building that relationship, keep working on it. You're understanding more what that kid's is going through and trying to do.” This plausible approach in informed decision making, give an individual the basis to articulate and defend their stance in making the decision to take or enact an action. The section below describes the actions enacted by the participants of this study to disrupt the racial discipline gap on their campuses.

High school leaders' actions to prevent the disproportionate representation of students of color removed discretionally to the DAEP. The participants of this study gave clear descriptions of the structures and systems they created to reduce the racial discipline gap in the discretionary removal of students to the DAEP. They also gave clear explanations on why they chose these strategies and their effectiveness. The codes or foundational components that emerged within this theme are the need to provide professional development opportunities and training to teachers in culturally responsive instructional strategies, restorative discipline practices, and the need to promote relationship building amongst all stakeholders. The relationships highlighted in the responses of the participants of this study are teacher-to-student, administrator-teachers, administrator-students, administrator-parents, and administrator-students-parents. The interactions that occur between and amongst these stakeholders within the school community result in social construction of different concepts, including the discipline practices employed in the schools.

Social. The interdependence nature of humans is clearly evident in the stakeholder relationships formed within a school community, both on the campus and outside, with the ultimate goal of improving student achievement. Relationship building entail conversation,

collaboration, compromise, and unavoidable conflicts (Banks, 2018). The social principle of sensemaking is evident daily in school communities as the players build relationships and form bonds to strengthen the relationships formed. Weick expressed that "those who forget that sensemaking is a social process miss a constant substrate that shapes interpretations and interpreting" (1995, pg. 39).

The social tenet of sensemaking is connected to multiple facets of this study. It is evident in the different social interactions and daily ongoing communication between and amongst administrators, teachers, students, and parents. Linda, the principal of Rover high school, mentioned the importance of relationship and how her administrative team encourage teachers to build relationships with their students.

> "We've really emphasized relationship building. Get to know the kids. That goes so far. There's a lot that we've worked with the teachers through the behavior ... Getting that committee was really the whole idea with a lot of behavioral trainings, through the committee, they've presented several times over the last three years to the teachers about behavioral management, about dealing with students."

Albert, the principal of Spark high school also affirmed the importance of forming the right relationships with students.

> "Student behaviors can be addressed, because it's a matter of educating our kids, encouraging our kids, talking with our kids, developing relationships with our kids. When we see them walking in the halls, quick checks, status checks, how are you doing or how's it going? When they're doing great things, you praise them, when they're not, you correct them. I mean, our kids enjoy the praising, they don't

like the correction, but they know it's fair because they know when they're wrong. It's just not giving kids referrals. It's developing relationships as those referrals happen."

Through the relationships established by the leaders with their teachers, students, and parents, they gathered information on the needs of their teachers in terms of the professional growth needed in the area of racial discipline gap. The leaders utilized the sense made to make decisions on the systems and structures they need to put in place and enact to disrupt the racial discipline gap.

Enactive of sensible environments. Karl Weick (1995) described enactment as the way people within an organization shape their environments through their actions. Weick referred to sensemaking as the "feedstock of institutionalism" (1995, p.36); which suggests a "this is the way things are done" mentality. One can determine the culture of a school through the way things are done, such as what they get done, there lack of getting things done. School leaders' sensemaking of students of color perceived inappropriate behaviors influenced by the culture and climate of the school might impair their ability to think through an incident to make the right decision reasonably. According to Weick (1995), people within an organization tend to "produce part of the environment" they belong to. Their reality is constructed through their actions. The participants exhibited the enactment of their environment through the different actions they took to address the racial discipline gap. They played active roles in shaping their environments through the different systems and structures they put in place such as, the targeted professonal development opportunities they provided to teachers and the campus-wide positive behavior interventions and support programs they implemented to address the racial disicipline gaps. According tho the accounts of the school principals, the school district at the time, rarely

discussed the issue of race and did not provide trainings related to disproportionate representation of students of color evident in discipline data. However, these campus leaders took the initiative to provide their teachers culturally responsive training opportunities and introduced programs to promote a positive behavior on their campuses.

Linda, the principal of Rover high school, recruited a social worker and a behavior specialist to support the teachers and the students. Linda said that “my personal feeling was we need to be proactive. I really wanted to get social skills training for the kids. Frequent fliers I wanted to have anger management training. I wanted them to have coping skills.” Linda shared her frustration regarding the lack of financial support of the district and how it resulted in the loss of the social worker. Linda further stated:

> “We also inform him when we get a word that students are going to fight or they're having a major problem. We like for him to talk to them either individually or try mediation if they are willing. He also goes into classroom to observe interactions between teacher and student and give the teacher feedback on how to build the right relationships with their students.”

Albert, the principal of Spark high school that he invested in training the teachers in restorative discipline practices. He also explained their discipline practice regarding discretionary removal of students to the DAEP. His campus implements a 30-days differed adjudication.

> “We count the number of referrals on a student if they've accumulated enough to be removed from this campus. Based on this, we ask ourselves the questions, "Are they a threat to a person, or are they just a threat to themselves, not physical, but just disregarding the discipline expectation of the campus?" If they're disregarding

> the discipline expectation of the campus, then they are a prime candidate for differed adjudication. What we will do is we will have a removal conference with student and parent. Based on what they make us believe that this is a mistake, this is not the kind of person they want to be, they want to change. Then, we will recommend them to be removed to the disciplinary alternative school for 30 days, but we will differ sending and adjudicate it to be served here at the campus as long as they don't violate the conditions of the adjudication. As long as they don't violate the conditions of the adjudication, they stay on campus to serve out the 30 days. We don't send the paperwork anywhere, we keep it in a folder. If they violate the adjudication conditions, then we turn around, and send them."

The findings indicate the high school principals and assistant principals play an active role in shaping their school environment by taking some actions, in this case, they provided targeted professional development to teachers on cultural competency and implemented campus-wide positive behavior programs; including the hiring of staff skilled in addressing student behavior and emotional needs. The findings confirm the sensemaking tenet of enactment which emphasizes that people create their environment through their actions and the environment created could be either constraints or opportunities (Weick, 1995, p. 31).

In addition, the interpretation of the findings suggests that school leaders' actions in an effort to disrupt the racial discipline gaps signify the process of the Sensegiving Theory. Gioia and Chittipedi (1991) described Sensegiving as "a process of attempting to influence the sensemaking and meaning construction of others toward a preferred definition of organizational reality" (pg. 442). The leaders that participated in this study made attempts to influence the teachers' perspectives and their interpretation of students of color's behaviors and discretionary

discipline through the provision of ongoing professional developments that focused cultural competency.

Limitations of the Study

Four school administrators, two campus principals and two assistant principals participated in this study. The four participants in this study are representative of a small sample size which limits the generalizability of results. This study focused on participants at the secondary level, specifically high school, limiting comparisons to elementary and middle schools. The two high schools are within a suburban school district located in Southwestern United States, which challenges connections to urban and rural districts. Therefore, results may not be representative on a national scale.

Implications for Future Research

This study offers several implications for future research. First, empirical research and the findings from this study indicate school principals and assistant principals spend a substantial amount of time each day to address student discipline (Good, 2008; Glanz, 1994; Williams, 2012). Therefore, there is a need to conduct ongoing professional learning to enhance school leaders' sensemaking of the various factors that can potentially influence and inform decision making; and revisit, revise, and refine discipline policies to support and inform school leaders on how to assign equitable consequences fairly. The second implication for future research is empirical research and findings from this study also suggest some teachers are culturally incompetent, oblivious of their biases and deficit mindsets (Weinstein et al., 2004). Future research is needed to examine the effectiveness of the provision of targeted ongoing professional learning for teachers that is focused on culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995), and

the five essential components of culturally responsive classroom management (Weinstein et al., 2004).

Thirdly, this study contained a small sample size of four participants. To provide a comparable reference point, there is a need to conduct research on a larger sample size of school leaders from multiple districts, including elementary and middle schools to assist in the generalizability of results. Additionally, future research on school leaders in urban and rural areas as a comparison to suburban schools would be insightful.

Finally, there is a need to conduct future study on the process of the Sensegiving theory that school leaders undergo in their efforts to build capacity to address the issue of the racial discipline gaps inherent in discretionary discipline practices.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study present the potential for changes in educational policies and practices from individual and institutional/organizational levels. As individuals, school administrators are responsible and are empowered to make discretionary decisions on discipline. The school leaders determine whether a student remain in school or excluded from school in response to the student's behavior perceived to violate the student code of conduct. They also determine the length of time of the absence or exclusion of the student from school. This research provides evidence to support campus disciplinarians that are relationship builders who employ restorative, non-punitive adopting discipline practices. This study also provides suggestions on how to enhance administrative practices and inform decision making to disrupt the racial discipline gap. It is hoped that administrators have cognizance of their cultural awareness and those of their student population. In so doing, they develop cultural competency

skills that enables them to consider their students' race and culture when they address discipline issues.

From the organizational level, school districts are charged with the responsibility of providing adequate support, through the establishment of systems and structures; and financial support that have the potential to disrupt the racial discipline gaps. There is also a need for school districts to provide school administrators ongoing professional training to enhance their skill-sets to effectively and cognitively address discipline issues, aware of their biases and prejudices. Examples of ongoing professional trainings the district could make available to campus administrators are: restorative discipline practices, investigative strategies, and others on how race intersect discipline practices. The ongoing professional learning will enable school leaders successfully negotiate the challenges that are inherent in their positions. School districts and their respective campuses should engage in constant data analyses to inform their practices and the types of ongoing trainings needed by their staff to cultivate meaningful relationships with all stakeholders to disrupt racial discipline gaps. It is not enough to analyze the data, districts and campuses must have conversations about the trends they observe and take appropriate actions. Also, they must have checkpoints, to assess if the structures and systems established are effective and if not, they must think of what can be tweaked to achieve the goals. It is also important that they determine and have a common understanding as a campus/district on what a successful goal will look like based on the context of the campus. All stakeholders, students, parents, teachers, counselors, coaches, behavior specialist, both district and campus administrators must be part of the reform process.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine how high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEPs and the actions they employed to reduce the overrepresentation of students of color. Racial disparities associated with exclusionary discipline practices have been well documented.

The participants of this study demonstrated their intentions to disrupt the racial discipline gaps inherent in the discretionary discipline practices specified by their district. Lewis and Diamond (2015) stated "…we have a system in which most operate with the best intentions and an investment in doing the right thing. Yet widespread cultural beliefs and persuasive racial stereotypes about all groups permeate deeply into school buildings, and they shape interactions" (pg. 76). From the findings, the school leaders' best intentions and commitments to do what is right contends with the systemic problem that is an integral part of the district's discipline policies, including the cultural misconceptions and pervasive racial stereotypes of the teachers.

This study is unique as it contributes to the lack empirical literature on both campus principals and assistant principals that have made attempts to disrupt racial discipline gaps. This research produced findings to support how school leaders that focus on building relationships with all stakeholders make sense of and attempt to disrupt the racial discipline gap; make sense of office discipline referrals, and navigate the conflicting positions they find themselves between their teachers' expectations on punitive consequences and the need to advocate for their students by making fair and equitable disciplinary decisions. The results point to a need for school leaders to build meaningful relationships to actively shape their environment through informed decision-making, refined investigative methods, and enactment of effective actions with a focus on student growth.

Appendix A

Table A1: Texas Total, Discretionary, and Mandatory DAEP Removals (2011-2015)

School Year	Total DAEP Removals	Discretionary Removals	Mandatory Removals
2010-2011	112,580	75,257	37,323
2011-2012	109,638	70,283	39,355
2012-2013	102,640	62,574	40,066
2013-2014	97,732	58,157	39,575
2014-2015	93,798	55,192	38,606

Table A2: Percentage Discretionary vs. Mandatory Removals in Texas (2011-2015)

School Year	Total Discretionary Removals/Total DAEP Removals	Percent (%) Discretionary Removals	Percent (%) Mandatory Removals
2010-2011	75,257/112,580	66.8%	33.2%
2011-2012	70,283/109,638	64.1%	35.9%
2012-2013	62,574/102,640	60.9%	39.1%
2013-2014	58,157/97,732	59.5%	40.5%
2014-2015	55,192/93,798	58.8%	41.2%

Table A3: Total Texas DAEP Removals by Race (2011-2015)

Race/Ethnicity	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
American Indian	537	488	387	434	387
Asian	710	659	641	547	528
African American	26,697	26,381	25,833	24,120	22,903
Latino/a	59,387	57,890	53,457	51,418	49,370
Native Hawaiian	89	114	129	115	108
Two or More	1,563	1,699	1,755	1,721	1,700
White	23,597	22,407	20,438	19,377	18,802
Total	112,580	109,638	102,640	97,732	93,798

Table A4: Total Texas Public School Enrollment by Race (2011-2015)

Race/Ethnicity	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
American Indian	23,602	22,383	21,795	20,225	21,480
Asian	169,338	177,185	183,789	189,906	202,229
African American	637,722	640,171	646,182	652,719	660,952
Latino/a	2,480,000	2,541,223	2,606,126	2,668,315	2,722,272
Native Hawaiian	6,127	6,257	6,644	6,901	7,112
Two or More	78,419	84,157	89,753	96,666	102,467
White	1,538,409	1,527,203	1,521,551	1,517,293	1,515,563

Table A5: Total Percent DAEP Removals of African American, Hispanic, and White Students (2011-2015): # of Total DAEP Removal Divided by Total Enrollment

Race/Ethnicity	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
African American	4.2%	4.1%	4.0%	3.7%	3.5%
Latino/a	2.4%	2.3%	2.1%	2.0%	1.8%
White	1.5%	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%

Compiled from Texas Education Agency PEIMS Standard Student Enrollment Reports (TEA, 2016).

Appendix B

Table B1: District's Total, Discretionary, and Mandatory DAEP Removals (2011-2015)

School Year	Total DAEP Removals	Discretionary Removals	Mandatory Removals
2010-2011	708	361	347
2011-2012	641	335	306
2012-2013	560	300	260
2013-2014	505	203	302
2014-2015	432	184	248

Table B2: Percentage Discretionary vs. Mandatory Removals in District (2011-2015)

School Year	Total Discretionary Removals/Total DAEP Removals	Percent (%) Discretionary Removals	Percent (%) Mandatory Removals
2010-2011	361/708	50.99%	49.01%
2011-2012	335/641	52.26%	47.74%
2012-2013	300/560	53.57%	46.43%
2013-2014	203/505	40.20%	59.80%
2014-2015	184/432	42.60%	57.40%

Table B3: Total District's DAEP Removals by Race (2011-2015)

Race/Ethnicity	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
American Indian	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Asian	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
African American	143	146	139	111	102
Latino/a	305	271	229	195	173
Native Hawaiian	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Two or More	16	19	19	16	23
White	228	196	163	170	126

Counts less than 5 and greater than 0 when necessary. Other associated counts masked with the value "N/A" to comply with FERPA (TEA, 2016).

Table B4: Percent District Enrollment by Race 2011-2015

Race/Ethnicity	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
American Indian	0.5%	0.4%	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%
Asian	12.0%	11.9%	12.6%	13.5%	13.5%
African American	9.1%	9.0%	8.9%	8.6%	8.6%
Latino/a	30.1%	30.2%	30.4%	30.3%	30.3%
Native Hawaiian	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Two or More	3.9%	4.2%	4.1%	4.3%	4.3%
White	44.7%	44.1%	43.4%	42.7%	42.7%

Table B5: Total Percentage District's DAEP Removals of African American, Hispanic, and White Students (2011-2015): # of Total DAEP Removal Divided by Total Enrollment

Race/Ethnicity	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
African American	3.49%	3.54%	3.36%	2.74%	2.51%
Latino/a	2.25%	1.96%	1.62%	1.36%	1.21%
White	1.13%	0.97%	0.80%	0.84%	0.62%

Compiled from Texas Education Agency PEIMS Standard Student Enrollment Reports (TEA, 2016).

Appendix C

"ROVER" HIGH SCHOOL

Table C1: Disproportionate Discretionary DAEP Representation and % Student Discretionary DAEP Removal 2011-2015

Year	Race/Ethnicity	% Enrollment	% Student Removed to DAEP
2011	African-American	14.3%	0.91% (3/329)
	Latino/a	36.6%	1.31% (11/840)
	White	39.2%	0.33% (3/900)
2012	African-American	14.4%	2.92% (12/411)
	Latino/a	35.7%	1.28% (13/1019)
	White	40.2%	0.35% (4/1149)
2013	African-American	13.6%	0.79% (3/378)
	Latino/a	35.2%	0.82% (8/980)
	White	41.0%	0.70% (8/1140)
2014	African-American	14.6%	0.50% (2/397)
	Latino/a	33.9%	0.11% (1/921)
	White	40.7%	0.18% (2/1106)
2015	African-American	14.0%	0.52% (2/385)
	Latino/a	36.1%	-
	White	38.5%	0.09% (1/1056)

"SPARK" HIGH SCHOOL

Table C2: Disproportionate Discretionary DAEP Representation and % Student Discretionary DAEP Removal 2011-2015

Year	Race/Ethnicity	% Enrollment	% Student Removed to DAEP
2011	African-American	15.0%	1.07% (4/374)
	Latino/a	42.7%	0.28% (3/1062)
	White	33.2%	0.12% (1/826)
2012	African-American	17.0%	1.29% (5/389)
	Latino/a	44.8%	0.68% (7/1025)
	White	29.8%	1.03% (7/682)
2013	African-American	18.0%	0.70% (3/428)
	Latino/a	43.9%	0.67% (7/1044)
	White	29.2%	0.43% (3/694)
2014	African-American	16.6%	1.47% (6/409)
	Latino/a	44.9%	0.27% (3/1104)
	White	29.8%	0.27% (2/734)
2015	African-American	16.1%	0.72% (3/418)
	Latino/a	44.8%	-
	White	30.5%	0.13% (1/794)

Appendix D

Cover Letter

As a school leader with experience in discretionary discipline practices, you are being asked to participate in a study that examines how high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal and implement discipline practices to make progress in reducing the overrepresentation of students of color in the Discretionary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs). Specifically, you will be asked to provide information regarding (a) how you make sense of discretionary discipline; and (b) how you implement the discretionary discipline practices on your campus in reducing the disproportionality.

A description of the study is provided below. Please read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether to participate or not. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You can stop your participation at any time, and your refusal will not impact current or future relationships with the University. To terminate participation, simply tell the researcher that you wish to stop. Any information provided for this study will be coded so that no personally identifiable information is recognizable to the consumers of this study.

Total Estimated Time Expected to Participate: 100 to 120 minutes.

Study Information and Consent

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study is to examine how high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEPs and the actions or practices they employ to reduce the overrepresentation of students of color.

Research Questions:
The overarching question that will guide this research is: How do high school leaders' sensemaking of discretionary discipline guidelines, their actions, and the practices they employ to reduce the overrepresentation of students of color in the DAEP? There are three parts to the overarching question. They are:

A. How do high school leaders make sense of discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?
B. How do high school leaders' sense-making inform their actions regarding the discretionary removal of students of color to the DAEP?
C. What do high school leaders do to prevent the disproportionate representation of students of color amongst those removed discretionally to the DAEP?

Potential Risks of Participation in the Study:
The potential for loss of confidentiality is minimal and no greater than everyday life. To minimize the potential risk for loss of confidentiality, however, all data will be maintained on a computer that has a password-required code to gain access to the data. Codenames will be used to maintain the anonymity of the site and all participants. If you wish to discuss the information

above, you may ask questions via reply to this email or call the Principal Investigator listed on the front page of this form.

Benefits of Participation in the Study:
There will be no direct benefits to the participants of this study. The findings of this study will add to the body of literature regarding the essential roles school leaders perform to reduce the overrepresentation of students of color amongst those removed discretionary to the DAEP. The findings might also be informative to school leaders and districts to understand better how the process of the sensemaking of the state, district, and campus discipline practices regarding discretionary DAEP removal could potentially contribute to or disrupt the discipline gap.

Compensation:
There is no compensation provided for participation in the study nor are there any costs to participants for participation in the research.

Confidentiality and Privacy Protections:

- The information resulting from your participation may be made available to other researchers in the future for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. In these cases, the data will contain no identifying information that could associate you with it, or with your participation in any study.
- Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. Pseudonyms will be used to maintain the anonymity of your responses.
- A written report that summarizes the findings of the study will be presented at area, regional, state, and/or national conferences
- Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with the University of Texas at Austin. If you decide to participate, you are free to decide to discontinue participation at any time.

The **records** of this study will be stored securely and kept confidentially. Authorized persons from the University of Texas at Austin and members of the Institutional Review Board have the legal right to review the research records and will protect the **confidentiality** of those records to the extent permitted by law. Throughout the study, the researcher will notify you of new information that may become available, and that might affect your decision to remain in the study.

Contacts and Questions:
If you have any questions about the study, please ask now. If you have questions later, want additional information, or wish to withdraw your participation, please call the researchers conducting the study. Their names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses are at the top of this page.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research, please contact Kehinde Olowoyeye, principal investigator, at 512-922-2949 or kolowoyeye@utexas.edu. Also, you can contact, anonymously if you wish, the Office of Research Support at (blinded for confidentiality).

You may keep the copy of this consent form. You are making a decision about participation in this study. You may discontinue participation at any time. If you choose to participate in the study, please indicate with a verbal consent.

Thank you for your time and participation.

Participant Demographic Information:
Gender: Female ___ Male___
Ethnicity: White/Caucasian___ Black/African-American___ Asian-American___
Pacific Islander___ Native-American___ Hispanic/Latino___ Other ____
Current position: Principal___ Assistant Principal___ Other _____
Total Years in current position: ____
Years in public education: _____
Highest education level: _____

Appendix E

Interview Protocol

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this study. Before we start, I'd like to remind you of the plan for this study. For the purpose of this study, I will be conducting at least two interviews with you. In this first interview, I'd like to learn a little about your career thus far and this school and then focus on your role as a leader as it relates to school discipline, with a focus on discretionary discipline practices. The interview will be recorded, and afterward, transcribed. I will share the transcriptions with you so that you can verify that your comments were recorded accurately.

After the first interview, I would like to have another conversation with you to explore more deeply into issues that were raised in this first conversation. Throughout the transcription, you will only be associated with a codename that I have given you. Your school will only be identified by an assigned codename as well. You are free to withdraw from participation in this study at any time.
Do you have any questions about this study or your role or rights as a participant?

Interview I - Part I. Career History
Tell me about your work as an educator.

1. How long have you been a principal or assistant principal at your school?
2. What other schools have you worked before this one and how did the experiences you acquired from these schools shape your leadership here?
3. Looking back on it, what would you say led you to become a principal?
4. Please tell me about your leadership professional growth relating to student discipline.
    a. How did those experiences influence how you approach discretionary discipline around the issues of equity at your school?
    b. Did your professional leadership development opportunities include training with a focus on disproportionate discretionary discipline?
    c. Has what you learned influenced your role as a leader on your campus regarding your consideration of the outcome of disproportionate discretionary student discipline? How?
    d. Can you give me an example?

Interview I - Part II. School Discipline General Issues

5. Tell me about your school (mission/vision/demographics/staff/community/students/programs/etc.)
6. When you first became a principal or assistant principal at **SCHOOL PSEUDONYM** what were your priorities? [list on a piece of paper]
7. At present, what are your main areas of focus? [List…]
8. Why are these areas on your list of priorities?
9. Regarding responsibilities related to school discipline, what areas are of concern that you find you HAVE TO address these days? [list…]

10. Do you think you all these areas can be addressed? If not, what is your process for sorting them out?
    a. What goes through your mind?
    b. With whom do you talk to about these things?
    c. What steps do you take to figure things out?
    d. Do you have a school resource officer on your campus? How is he or she a part of school discipline decisions at your school?
11. How would you describe your overall approach to school discipline, especially discretionary discipline? Describe a scenario in which you implemented the strategy.
12. In your opinion, how is school discipline connected to student learning?
    a. How is school discipline connected to student achievement?
13. Please tell me about any significant teaching, professional development, or other learning experiences that you feel have influenced your positionality toward discretionary school discipline approaches.
    a. Do you have any previous teaching experiences that you feel influenced your approach to discretionary school discipline?
    b. How have your experiences and training shaped your leadership here?
    c. Has your approach to discretionary school discipline changed over time or remained the same?

Interview II

1. Tell me about the school discipline climate in your school.
    a. Share an example of a discretionary disciplinary event you were recently involved in its organization or attended.
    b. Are there any other significant discretionary discipline events that you would like to share?
    c. How do teachers tend to handle behavior problems in your school?
2. In your current position, how often do you address discretionary school discipline issues?
    a. How do you see your role in supporting teachers in discretionary school discipline issues?
    b. How do you view your role in supporting students in discretionary school discipline issues?
    c. Where do you seek support when handling discretionary disciplinary issues at your school?
    d. What type of resistance do you confront at your school related to discretionary disciplinary decisions? From teachers? From parents? From central office? From the community?
    e. Do you have a school resource officer in your building? If so, what role does he or she play in discretionary school discipline?
3. How do you use school and district policy when making discretionary disciplinary decisions?
    a. How do you use the local code of conduct at your school? How do others use the local code of conduct at your school?
    b. Does your school or district employ zero-tolerance approaches to discipline? If so, how? Do you find it to be effective? Why or why not?

4. Are there any new initiatives to address student discipline, especially discretionary discipline, at your school or district?
    a. If so, how would you describe them?
    b. Where did these ideas come from?
    c. How would you describe your role in identifying these initiatives?
    d. How do you think training, school programs, and policy mandates have influenced the disproportionate racial discipline relating to student removal to the DAEP at your school?
5. What data do you use in your approach to school discipline and discretionary DAEP removal rates?
    a. What are the data sources available to you, in your school, related to discipline and discretionary DAEP removal?
    b. What are the data sources available to you, in your district, related to discipline and discretionary DAEP removal rates?
6. Your school's discretionary DAEP removal data over a 5-year period has shown some reductions in the removal rates of students of color. Describe the disciplinary strategies implemented to achieve the reductions.
    b. How were these strategies introduced to teachers?
    c. What types of training were involved?
    d. What issues or concerns emerged or continue to persist as you implement these strategies?
    e. What barriers do you face in addressing these problems?
    f. How do you address related problems with your staff? With your community? With your students?
    g. From whom do you seek help? How? Why? Do you collaborate with others in the community or other principals?
7. What other information would you like to share?

Thanks for participating in this study.

*Adapted from Lippa, 2016

Appendix F

DAEP Texas Policy and Practice: Chapter 37, District Code of Student Conduct. The TEC, Title 2: Public Education, Subtitle G. Safe Schools, Chapter 37. Discipline: Law and Order mandates Subchapter A. Alternative Settings for Behavior Management.

The TEC Chapter 37.001(a) starts by mandating that every school district in the state prepare and have a student code of conduct that includes the following: (1) specify the circumstances, in accordance with this subchapter, under which a student may be removed from a classroom, campus, or disciplinary alternative education program; (2) specify conditions that authorize or require a principal or other appropriate administrator to transfer a student to a disciplinary alternative education program; (3) outline conditions under which a student may be suspended as provided by Section 37.005 or expelled as provided by Section 37.007; (4) specify that consideration will be given, as a factor in each decision concerning suspension, removal to a disciplinary alternative education program, expulsion, or removal to a juvenile justice alternative education program, regardless of whether the decision concerns a mandatory or discretionary action, to: (A) self-defense; (B) intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct; (C) a student's disciplinary history; or (D) a disability that substantially impairs the student's capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student's conduct; (5) provide guidelines for setting the length of a term of: (A) a removal under Section 37.006; and (B) an expulsion under Section 37.007; (6) address the notification of a student's parent or guardian of a violation of the student code of conduct committed by the student that results in suspension, removal to a disciplinary alternative education program, or expulsion; (7) prohibit bullying, harassment, and making hit lists and ensure that district employees enforce those prohibitions; and (8) provide, as appropriate for students at each grade level, methods, including options, for: (A) managing

students in the classroom and on school grounds; (B) disciplining students; and (C) preventing and intervening in student discipline problems, including bullying, harassment, and making hit lists.

In this section: (1) "Harassment" means threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, engaging in sexually intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another student, subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety. (2) "Hit list" means a list of people targeted to be harmed, using: (A) a firearm, as defined by Section 46.01(3), Penal Code; (B) a knife, as defined by Section 46.01(7), Penal Code; or (C) any other object to be used with intent to cause bodily harm. (b-1) The methods adopted under Subsection (a)(8) must provide that a student who is enrolled in a special education program under Subchapter A, Chapter 29, may not be disciplined for conduct prohibited in accordance with Subsection (a)(7) until an admission, review, and dismissal committee meeting has been held to review the conduct. (c) Once the student code of conduct is promulgated, any change or amendment must be approved by the board of trustees. (d) Each school year, a school district shall provide parents notice of and information regarding the student code of conduct. (e) Except as provided by Section 37.007(e), this subchapter does not require the student code of conduct to specify a minimum term of a removal under Section 37.006 or an expulsion under Section 37.007.

Section 37.001 (a) provides an outline and all the requirements that the local district must include in the district student code of conduct. The focus for a DAEP is to enable students to perform at grade level (TEC, 37.008). According to the TEC, Sec. 37.008 each school district is required to provide a DAEP that: Sec. 37.008 (a) (1) is provided in a setting other than a

student's regular classroom; (2) is located on or off of a regular school campus; (3) provides for the students who are assigned to the disciplinary alternative education program to be separated from students who are not assigned to the program; (4) focuses on English language arts, mathematics, science, history, and self-discipline; (5) provides for students' educational and behavioral needs; (6) provides supervision and counseling; (7) employs only teachers who meet all certification requirements established under Subchapter B, Chapter 21; and (8) provides not less than the minimum amount of instructional time per day required by Section 25.082(a).

Section 37.008 (a) (4) requires the DAEP to incorporate an approved curriculum of English language arts, mathematics, science, history, and self-discipline; programs may include other courses but is not required. If a student needs a class in Spanish the DAEP is not required to provide it except as recommended in Section 37.008 (m). The school district may provide the student an opportunity to complete coursework through any method available, including a correspondence course, distance learning, or summer school. The district may not charge the student for a course provided under this subsection. Section 37.008 (f) provides for the funding level of DAEPs at the same level as the home campus. (f) A student removed to a disciplinary alternative education program is counted in computing the average daily attendance of students in the district for the student's time in actual attendance in the program.

Appendix G
2015-2016 PEIMS Data Standards: Additional Information Related to Discipline Action and Truancy Reporting

TABLE G1: PEIMS CODE TABLE C165 DISCIPLINARY ACTION REASONS CODES AND DEFINITIONS

Discipline Reason Code	Translation/Definition
01	**Permanent removal by a teacher from class** – TEC §37.002(c) A teacher may permanently remove a student from the classroom **(1)** who has been documented by the teacher to repeatedly interfere with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn; or **(2)** whose behavior the teacher determines is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn.
02	**Engages in Conduct Punishable as a Felony** - TEC §37.006(a)(2)(a) - Includes all felony activities that are not otherwise more specifically defined or included as a behavior that requires a mandatory expulsion action.
04	**Marihuana or Controlled Substance or Dangerous Drug** - TEC §37.006(a)(2)(C) and §37.007(b)(2)(A) sells, gives, or delivers to another person or possesses or uses or is under the influence of marihuana or a controlled substance, as defined by Health and Safety Code Chapter 481, , or a dangerous drug, as defined by Health and Safety Code Chapter 483. Health and Safety Code Chapter 481 defines **marihuana** as Cannabis Sativa whether growing or not, the seeds of the plant, and every compound, manufacture, salt, derivative, mixture, or preparation of that plant or its seeds. The term does not include resin extracted from a part of the plant, the mature stalks of the plant or fiber produced from the stalks, oil or cake made from the seeds of the plant, the sterilized seeds of the plant or a compound, manufacture, salt, derivative, mixture, or preparations of the mature stalks, fiber, oil or cake. Health and Safety Code Chapter 481 defines a **controlled substance** as a substance, including a drug and an immediate precursor, listed in Schedules I-V or penalty Groups 1-4 of the Health and Safety Code. Possession of any amount in Penalty Groups 1 and 2 is a felony. Possession of a controlled substance in Penalty Groups 3 and 4 is a felony if the amount is more than 28 grams. It is also a felony to deliver a controlled substance to a minor. (However, this offense does not apply to minors in some circumstances.) Health and Safety Code Chapter 483 defines a **dangerous drug** as a device or a drug that is unsafe for self-medication and that is not included in Schedules I-V or penalty Groups 1-4 of the Health and Safety Code. The term includes a device or drug that bears or is required to bear the legend: (a) Caution: federal law prohibits dispensing without a prescription; or (b) Caution: federal law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian. "Marihuana or Controlled Substance or Dangerous Drug" *violation is also a discretionary expellable offense dependent on the local Student Code of Conduct.* If a violation under this category is committed at a felony level, then the student must be expelled from their regular education setting. Use Disciplinary Action Reason Code 36 for reporting when this occurs.

Discipline Reason Code	Translation/Definition
05	**Alcohol** - sells, gives, or delivers to another person an alcoholic beverage, as defined by Alcoholic Beverage Code Section 1.04 commits a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol, or possesses, uses, or is under the influence of an alcoholic beverage. Alcoholic Beverage Code Section 1.04 defines an alcoholic beverage as alcohol, or any beverage containing more than one-half of one percent of alcohol by volume, which is capable of use for beverage purposes, either alone or when diluted. "Alcohol" *violation is also a discretionary expellable offense dependent on the local Student Code of Conduct.* If a violation under this category is committed at a felony level, then the student must be expelled from their regular education setting. Use Disciplinary Action Reason Code 37 for reporting when this occurs.
06	**Abuse of a Volatile Chemical** - engages in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to an abusable volatile chemical (glue, aerosol paint, etc) under Sections 485.031 through 485.034, Health and Safety Code, or relating to volatile chemicals under Chapter 484, Health and Safety Code. Chapter 485.031, Health and Safety Code, defines the offense abuse of a volatile chemical as when a person inhales, ingests, applies, uses, or possesses a volatile chemical with the intent to inhale, ingest, apply, or use a volatile chemical (glue, aerosol paint, etc) in a manner contrary to the directions for use, cautions or warnings appearing on a label of a container of chemical and is designed to affect the persons central nervous system, create or induce a condition of intoxication, hallucination, or elation or change or distort or disturb the person's eyesight, thinking process, balance or coordination. "Abuse of a Volatile Chemical" *violation is also a discretionary expellable offense dependent on the local Student Code of Conduct.*
07	**Public Lewdness/Indecent Exposure** - engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of public lewdness under Penal Code Section 21.07 or indecent exposure under Section 21.08, Penal Code. Penal Code Chapter 21.07 defines public lewdness as when a person knowingly engages in any of the following acts in a public place or, if not in a public place, is reckless about whether another is present or will be offended or alarmed by: an act of sexual intercourse; act of deviate sexual intercourse; act of sexual contact; or act involving contact between the person's mouth or genitals and the anus or genitals of an animal or fowl. Penal Code Chapter 21.08 defines indecent exposure as an offense when a person exposes his anus or any part of his genitals with intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person, and he is reckless about whether another is present who will be offended or alarmed by his act.
08	**Retaliation against School Employee** - engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of retaliation under Penal Code Section 36.06 against any school employee. Penal Code Section 36.06 defines the offense of retaliation as when a person intentionally or knowingly harms or threatens to harm another by an unlawful act in retaliation for or on account of the service of another as a public servant, witness, prospective witness, informant, or a person who has reported or who the actor knows intends to report the occurrence of a crime or to prevent or delay the service of another as a public servant, witness, prospective witness,

Discipline Reason Code	Translation/Definition
	informant, or a person who has reported or who the actor knows intends to report the occurrence of a crime. "Retaliation against School Employee" *violation is also a discretionary expellable offense dependent on the local Student Code of Conduct.* **If a violation under this reason is committed at a felony level, then the student must be expelled from their regular education setting.**
09	**Title 5 Felony Committed Off Campus** - A student who commits an off-campus felony **must be removed from their regular education program and placed** in a DAEP if: (a) the student receives deferred prosecution for conduct and the conduct is defined as a felony under Title 5 of the Penal Code; (b) a court or jury finds that the off-campus conduct engaged in by the student constitutes delinquent conduct and is defined as a felony under Title 5 of the Penal Code; or, (c) the superintendent or the superintendent's designee has a reasonable belief that the student engaged in conduct defined as a felony under Title 5 of the Penal Code. **Title 5 felonies include**: murder; capital murder; manslaughter; criminally negligent homicide; kidnapping; aggravated kidnapping; indecency with a child; felony assault; sexual assault; aggravated assault; aggravated sexual assault; injury to a child, elderly individual, or disabled individual; abandoning or endangering a child; deadly conduct; terroristic threat; aiding suicide; and tampering with a consumer product. A student who is at least 10 years of age **may be expelled** if the student engages in conduct that contains the elements of any offense listed in Subsection (a)(2)(A) or (C) (**murder**, **capital murder**, **criminal attempt to commit murder** or **capital murder**; **aggravated assault** under Penal Code §22.02; **sexual assault** under Penal Code §22.011 or **aggravated sexual assault** under Penal code §22.021), **against another student from the same campus**, without regard to whether the conduct occurs on or off of school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property. "The provision for a *discretionary expulsion under for these offenses* is *dependent on the local Student Code of Conduct."*
10	**Non-Title 5 Felony Committed Off Campus** - A student **may be removed** from class and placed in a DAEP under TEC §37.008 based on conduct occurring off campus and while the student is not in attendance at a school-sponsored or school-related activity if; (a) the superintendent or the superintendent's designee has a reasonable belief that the student has engaged in conduct defined as a felony offense other than those defined in Title 5, Penal Code; and (b) the continued presence of the student in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students or teachers or will be detrimental to the educational process. A student who is at least 10 years of age **may be expelled** if the student engages in conduct that contains the elements of **aggravated robbery** under Penal Code §29.03, **against another student from the same campus**, without regard to whether the conduct occurs on or off of school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property. "The provision for a *discretionary expulsion under this offense* is *dependent on the local Student Code of Conduct."*

Discipline Reason Code	Translation/Definition
11	**Firearm** - Brought a Firearm to School – TEC 37.007(e) or Unlawful Carrying of a Handgun under Penal Code 46.02 – TEC 37.007(a)(1) 18 U.S.C. Section 921 Under 18 U.S.C. Section 921, the term "firearm" means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. Under 18 U.S.C. Section 921, antique firearms (manufactured prior to 1899) are not included in the definition of a firearm. **BB and pellet guns are not considered firearms under this definition**. The use, exhibition, or possession of these items, while probably prohibited by the local Student Code of Conduct, is not an acceptable reason for expelling a student.
12	**Illegal Knife** - Unlawful Carrying of an Illegal Knife under Penal Code 46.02 – TEC 37.007(a)(1) (Illegal knife - blade longer than 5.5 inches). Penal Code Section 46.01(6) defines an **illegal knife** as a knife with a **blade length longer than 5.5 inches** and includes in the definition of knife a hand instrument designed to cut or stab another by being thrown, a dagger (including but not limited to a dirk, stiletto, and poniard), a bowie knife, a sword, or a spear. **Switchblade/automatic opening knives with an overall blade length not greater than 5.5 inches are not considered illegal knives under Penal Code Section 46.02 or 46.01(6).**
13	**Club** - Unlawful Carrying of a Club under Penal Code 46.02 – TEC 37.007(a)(1). Penal Code Section 46.01(1) defines a **club** as an instrument that is specifically designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with the instrument, and includes but is not limited to a blackjack, nightstick, mace, or a tomahawk.
14	**Prohibited Weapon** - Conduct Containing the Elements of an Offense Relating to Prohibited Weapons Under Penal Code 46.05 – TEC 37.007(a)(1). Penal Code Section 46.05 defines a **prohibited weapon** as one of the following: an explosive weapon (Penal Code 46.01(2)), a machine gun (Penal Code 46.01(9)), a short-barrel firearm (Penal Code 46.01(10)), a firearm silencer (Penal Code 46.01(4)), knuckles (i.e. brass knuckles) (Penal Code 46.01(8)), armor-piercing ammunition (Penal Code 46.01(12)), a chemical dispensing device (i.e. Mace or Pepper Gas) (Penal Code 46.01(14)), ~~or~~ a zip gun (Penal Code 46.01(16)), or a tire deflation device (Penal Code 46.01(17)).
16	**Arson** – Penal Code Section 28.02 defines **arson** as when a person starts a fire or causes an explosion with intent to destroy or damage any vegetation, fence, structure, open-space land, building or

Discipline Reason Code	Translation/Definition
	vehicle knowing that it is within the limits of an incorporated city or town, it is insured, it is subject to mortgage or it is located on property belonging to another.
17	**Murder, Capital Murder, or Criminal Attempt to Commit Murder/Capital Murder** – Penal Code Section 19.02 defines **murder** as when a person intentionally or knowingly causes the death of another person, intends to cause serious bodily injury and commits an act clearly dangerous to human life that causes the death of an individual or commits or attempts to commit a felony, other than manslaughter, and in the course thereof he commits an act clearly dangerous to human life that causes the death of an individual. Penal Code Section 19.03 defines **capital murder** as when a person commits an offense defined under Section 19.02 and the person murders a peace officer or fireman who is acting in the lawful discharge of an official duty, the person intentionally commits murder during the course of committing or attempting to commit kidnapping, burglary, robbery, aggravated sexual assault, arson, or obstruction or retaliation. A person also commits capital murder if the person commits murder for remuneration or the promise of remuneration or employs another to commit murder for remuneration. Section 15.01, Penal Code, defines **criminal attempt** as when a person if, with specific intent to commit an offense, does the act amounting to more than mere preparation but fails to effect the commission of the offense intended.
18	**Indecency with a Child** - Penal Code Section 21.11 defines **indecency with a child** as when a person, with a person younger than 17 years, engages in sexual contact with student or exposes his anus or any part of his genitals knowing the student is present with intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person.
19	**Aggravated Kidnapping** – Penal Code Section 20.04 defines **aggravated kidnapping** as when a person intentionally or knowingly abducts another person with intent to hold him for ransom, use him as a hostage, facilitate the commission of a felony, afflict bodily injury on him or abuse him sexually, terrorize him or a third person, or interfere with the performance of any governmental or political function.
21	**Violation of Student Code of Conduct** - This category includes bullying, harassment, and making hit lists (TEC §37.001) and reasons not specifically identified in TEC Chapter 37 that are adopted by the local school board and itemized and identified in the local Student Code of Conduct.
22	**Criminal Mischief** - A student may be expelled under Section 37.007(f) for conduct that contains the offense of criminal mischief **if that conduct is punishable as a felony**. Otherwise, the most severe action that may be taken would be placement in a DAEP. Penal Code Section 28.03 defines criminal mischief as when a person intentionally or knowingly damages or destroys the tangible property of the owner, intentionally or knowingly tampers with the tangible property of the owner and causes a pecuniary loss or substantial inconvenience to the owner or a third person. A felony under this section occurs when damage exceeds $1,500. For example, this section would apply to cases of graffiti if the total cost of repair and cleaning exceeds $1,500.
23	**Emergency Placement/Expulsion** - The use of this code is limited based upon the behavior the student has committed.

Discipline Reason Code	Translation/Definition
	Emergency DAEP Placement If the student has committed a behavior that either under state law (TEC §37.006) or the local Student Code of Conduct requires a DAEP placement and the principal or their designee **reasonably believes** that the student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with a teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in a class, with the ability of the student's classmates to learn, or with the operation of school or a school-sponsored activity, then the student may be placed on an **emergency and temporary basis** to a DAEP pending a conference hearing required under TEC §37.009 taking place. **Emergency Expulsion** If the student has committed a behavior under state law (TEC §37.007) that would require an expulsion or the student has committed a behavior under state law (TEC §37.007) that would allow for a discretionary expulsion and the local Student Code of Conduct requires/allows for the discretionary expulsion and the principal or their designee **reasonably believes** that the immediate expulsion of the student is necessary to protect persons or property from imminent harm, then the student may be expelled on an **emergency and temporary basis** to a setting without educational services available pending an expulsion hearing required under TEC §37.009 taking place.
26	**Terroristic Threat** - Under Penal Code Section 22.07, a person commits an offense if he threatens to commit any offense involving violence to any person or property with the intent to: (a) cause a reaction of any type to his threat by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies; or (b) place any person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury; or (c) prevent or interrupt the occupation or use of a building; room; place of assemble; place to which the public has access; place of employment or occupation; aircraft, automobile, or other form of conveyance; or other public place; or (d) cause impairment or interruption of public communications, public transportation, public water, gas, or power supply or other public service. A person who receives a terroristic threat must not only believe the threat, but also believe that the person making the threat will carry it out. "Terroristic Threat" *violation is also a discretionary expellable offense dependent on the local Student Code of Conduct.*
27	**Assault of School Staff** - Penal Code Section 22.01 (a) (1) defines assault as when a person intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causes bodily injury to another person. For purposes of this reason, an assault must involve a victim and a perpetrator(s) and the victim must receive bodily injury. If these criteria are not met, then the proper Discipline Action Reason Code would be **Other Student Code of Conduct Violation** (Action Reason Code 21).
28	**Assault of Someone other than School Staff** - Penal Code Section 22.01 (a) (1) defines assault as when a person intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causes bodily injury to another person. **Two or more students cannot assault each other.** For purposes of this reason, an assault must involve a victim and a perpetrator(s) and the victim must receive bodily injury.

Discipline Reason Code	Translation/Definition
	If these criteria are not met, then the proper Discipline Action Reason Code would be **Other Student Code of Conduct Violation** (Action Reason Code 21).
29	**Aggravated Assault against School Staff** - Aggravated assault against a school district employee or volunteer under Penal Code Section 22.02. Penal Code Section 22.02 defines **aggravated assault** as an offense as defined in §22.01 if the person causes **serious bodily** injury to another, including the person's spouse, or **uses or exhibits a deadly weapon** during the commission of the assault. For this Action Reason there must be a victim(s) and a perpetrator(s). Two persons cannot commit aggravated assault against each other.
30	**Aggravated Assault against Student** - Aggravated assault against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer under Penal Code Section 22.02. Penal Code Section 22.02 defines **aggravated assault** as an offense as defined in §22.01 if the person causes **serious bodily** injury to another, including the person's spouse, or **uses or exhibits a deadly weapon** during the commission of the assault. For this Action Reason there must be a victim(s) and a perpetrator(s). Two persons cannot commit aggravated assault against each other.
31	**Sexual Assault/Aggravated Sexual Assault against School Staff** - sexual assault under Penal Code Section 22.011, or aggravated sexual assault under Penal Code Section 22.021 against a school district employee or volunteer. Penal Code Section 22.011 defines **sexual assault** as when a person intentionally or knowingly causes the penetration of the anus or female sexual organ of another person by any means without that person's consent, causes the penetration of the mouth of another person by the sexual organ of the actor without the person's consent or causes the sexual organ of another person, without the person's consent, to contact, or penetrate the mouth, anus, or sexual organ of another person, including the actor. **Sexual assault** is also defined as when a person intentionally or knowingly causes the penetration of the anus or female sexual organ of a child by any means, causes the penetration of the mouth of a child by the sexual organ of the actor, causes the sexual organ of a child to contact or penetrate the mouth, anus, or sexual organ of another person, including the actor, or causes the anus of a child to contact the mouth, anus, or sexual organ of another person, including the actor. Penal Code Section 22.021, , defines **aggravated sexual assault** as any of the offenses listed above in Penal Code Section 22.011 if the person causes serious bodily injury or attempts to cause the death of the victim or another person in the course of the same criminal episode, places the victim in fear that death, serious bodily injury, or kidnapping will be imminently inflicted on any person, by acts or words threatens to cause death or serious bodily injury or kidnapping of any person or who uses or exhibits a deadly weapon in the course of the same criminal episode. A person also commits the offense of aggravated sexual assault if they act in concert with another who engages in such conduct or commits the offense of sexual assault on a person who is younger than 14 or 65 years of age or older (Chapter 318, Section 9).
32	**Sexual Assault/Aggravated Sexual Assault against Student** - sexual assault under Penal Code Section 22.011, or aggravated sexual assault under Penal Code Section 22.021 against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer.

Discipline Reason Code	Translation/Definition
	Penal Code Section 22.011 defines **sexual assault** as when a person intentionally or knowingly causes the penetration of the anus or female sexual organ of another person by any means without that person's consent, causes the penetration of the mouth of another person by the sexual organ of the actor without the person's consent or causes the sexual organ of another person, without the person's consent, to contact, or penetrate the mouth, anus, or sexual organ of another person, including the actor. **Sexual assault** is also defined as when a person intentionally or knowingly causes the penetration of the anus or female sexual organ of a child by any means, causes the penetration of the mouth of a child by the sexual organ of the actor, causes the sexual organ of a child to contact or penetrate the mouth, anus, or sexual organ of another person, including the actor, or causes the anus of a child to contact the mouth, anus, or sexual organ of another person, including the actor. Penal Code Section 22.021 defines **aggravated sexual assault** as any of the offenses listed above in Penal Code Section 22.011 if the person causes serious bodily injury or attempts to cause the death of the victim or another person in the course of the same criminal episode, places the victim in fear that death, serious bodily injury, or kidnapping will be imminently inflicted on any person, by acts or words threatens to cause death or serious bodily injury or kidnapping of any person or who uses or exhibits a deadly weapon in the course of the same criminal episode. A person also commits the offense of aggravated sexual assault if they act in concert with another who engages in such conduct or commits the offense of sexual assault on a person who is younger than 14 or 65 years of age or older (Chapter 318, Section 9).
33	**Tobacco Violations** – **Health and Safety Code, Section 3.01, Chapter 161.252** – An individual who is younger than 18 years of age commits an offense if the individual: (1) possesses, purchases, consumes, or accepts a cigarette or tobacco product; or (2) falsely represents himself or herself to be 18 years of age or older by displaying proof of age that is false, fraudulent, or not actually proof of the individual's own age in order to obtain possession of, purchase, or receive a cigarette or tobacco product. **Tobacco on School Property TEC § 38.006** – The board of trustees of a school district shall: **(1)** prohibit smoking or using tobacco products at a school-related or school-sanctioned activity on or off school property; **(2)** prohibit students from possessing tobacco products at a school-related or school-sanctioned activity on or off school property; and **(3)** ensure that school personnel enforce the policies on school property.
34	**School Related Gang Violence** – A violent action not otherwise defined under TEC §37.006 and/or §37.007 by three or more persons having a common identifying sign or symbol or an identifiable sign or symbol or an identifiable leadership who associate in the commission of criminal activities under Penal Code §71.01.
35	**False Alarm/False Report** - A student who commits an offense if he knowingly initiates, communicates or circulates a report of a present, past, or future bombing, fire, offense, or other emergency that he knows is false or baseless and that would ordinarily: (a) cause action by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies; (b) place a person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury; or (c) prevent or interrupt the occupation of a building, room, place of assembly, place to which the public has access, or aircraft, automobile, or other mode of conveyance. "False Alarm/False Report" *violation is also a discretionary expellable offense dependent on the local Student Code of Conduct.*

Discipline Reason Code	Translation/Definition
36	**Felony Controlled Substance Violation** - Examples would include four (4) ounces or more of marijuana, any amount of cocaine, and other controlled substances. Always get corroboration from law enforcement before using this Action Reason code.
37	**Felony Alcohol Violation** - An example would be intoxication manslaughter. Always get corroboration from law enforcement before using this Action Reason code.
41	**Fighting/Mutual Combat** - Fighting is defined as two or more students or persons that choose to mutually engage in physical combat using blows or force to strive to overcome the other student(s) or person(s).
42	***Truancy (failure to attend school) – Parent contributing to truancy*** – ***TEC §25.093. Parent Contributing to Truancy –*** *TEC §25.093(a) If a warning is issued as required by TEC §25.095(a), the parent with criminal negligence fails to require the child to attend school as required by law, and the child has absences for the amount of time specified under Family Code §65.003(a) the parent commits an offense.*
44	***Truancy (failure to attend school) – Student with 10 unexcused absences*** – *Family Code §65.003(a) - Truant Conduct -* *A child ages 12-18 engages in truant conduct if the child is required to attend school under TEC §25.085, and fails to attend school on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year.*
45	***Truancy –Failure to Enroll in School*** – ***TEC § 25.085 Compulsory School Attendance -*** *TEC §25.085(b) Unless specifically exempted by TEC §25.086, a child who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reached the child's 19th birthday shall attend school.*
46	**Aggravated Robbery -** Penal Code §29.03 defines **aggravated robbery** as when a person commits robbery as defined in Section 29.02, and he: (1) causes serious bodily injury to another; (2) uses or exhibits a deadly weapon; or (3) causes bodily injury to another person or threatens or places another person in fear of imminent bodily injury or death, if the other person is: (A) 65 years of age or older; or (B) a disabled person. **Penal Code** §**29.02** defines **robbery** as a person commits an offense if, in the course of committing theft as defined in Chapter 31 and with intent to obtain or maintain control of the property, he: (1) intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causes bodily injury to another; or (2) intentionally or knowingly threatens or places another in fear of imminent bodily injury or death.
47	**Manslaughter -** Penal Code §19.04 defines **manslaughter** as a person commits an offense if he recklessly causes the death of an individual.
48	**Criminally Negligent Homicide -** Penal Code §19.05 defines **criminally negligent homicide** as a person commits an offense if he causes the death of an individual by criminal negligence.
49	**Deadly Conduct** – Penal Code §22.05 defines **deadly conduct** as when a person recklessly engages in conduct that places another in imminent danger of serious bodily injury, or a person commits an offense if he knowingly discharges a firearm at or in the direction of: (1) one or more individuals; or (2) a habitation, building, or vehicle and is reckless as to whether the habitation, building, or vehicle is occupied. Recklessness and danger are presumed if the actor knowingly pointed a firearm at or in the direction of another whether or not the actor believed the firearm to be loaded. For purposes of this section, "building," "habitation," and "vehicle"

Discipline Reason Code	Translation/Definition
	have the meanings assigned those terms by Section 30.01. An offense under Penal Code §22.05(a) is a Class A misdemeanor. An offense under Penal Code §22.05(b) is a felony of the third degree.
55	**Student Is Required To Register As A Sex Offender Under Chapter 62 Of The Code Of Criminal Procedure And Is Under Court Supervision** - TEC §37.304. The offense(s) for which the student is required to register as a sex offender must have occurred on or after Sept. 1, 2007.
56	**Student Is Required To Register As A Sex Offender Under Chapter 62 Of The Code Of Criminal Procedure And Is Not Under Court Supervision** - TEC §37.305. The offense(s) for which the student is required to register as a sex offender must have occurred on or after Sept. 1, 2007.
57	**Continuous Sexual Abuse Of Young Child Or Children Under Penal Code §21.02** - Occurring on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property – TEC §37.007(a)(2)(I)
58	**Breach of Computer Security Under Penal Code §33.02 – TEC 37.007 -** A student engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of breach of computer security under Section 33.02 if the person knowingly accesses a computer, computer network, or computer system without the effective consent of the owner if the conduct involves accessing a computer, computer network, or computer system owned by or operated on behalf of a school district; and the student knowingly: (i) alters, damages, or deletes school district property or information; or, (ii) commits a breach of any other computer, computer network, or computer system.
59	**Serious Misbehavior, as defined by TEC §37.007(c), while expelled to/placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) -** TEC §37.007(c) defines "serious misbehavior" as: (1) deliberate violent behavior that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others; (2) extortion, meaning the gaining of money or other property by force or threat; (3) conduct that constitutes coercion, as defined by Penal Code §1.07,; or (4) conduct that constitutes the offense of: (A) public lewdness under Penal Code §21.07, (B) indecent exposure under Penal Code §21.08; (C) criminal mischief under Penal Code §28.03; (D) personal hazing under Penal Code §37.152; or (E) harassment under Penal Code §42.07(a)(1), of a student or district employee.

TABLE G2: DISCIPLINARY REASON AND ACTION CODES

NOTE: This chart represents the minimum required actions and maximum allowed actions for school districts. It does not apply to charter schools except for code 11 – (Possession or use of Firearms at school or a school related activity), unless a charter school has adopted one of the other mandatory provisions into its student code of conduct.

Disciplinary Action Reason Codes		**Behavior Location Code**	**Disciplinary Action Codes**			
Code and Translation		Behavior Location Code	Mandatory DAEP Placement	Mandatory Expulsion	Discretionary DAEP Placement	Discretionary Expulsion
01	Permanent removal by a teacher from class (Teacher has removed the student from classroom and denied the student the right to return. TEC §37.003 has been invoked.) – TEC §37.002(c)	On campus (01)			D	
02	Conduct punishable as a felony-TEC §37.006(a)(2)(A)	On campus (01)	M			
	TEC §37.006(a)(2)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)	M			
	TEC §37.006(a)(2)(A)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)	M			
	TEC §37.006(d)	Off Campus, no school related/sponsored activity (04)			D	
	TEC §37.0081	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)			D	
04	Possessed, sold, or used marihuana or other controlled substance-TEC §37.006(a)(2)(C) and 37.007(b)(2)(A) for under the influence	On campus (01)	M			D
	TEC §37.006(a)(2)(C) and 37.007(b)(2)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)	M			D

	TEC §37.006(a)(2)(C) and 37.007(b)(2)(A)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)	M	[redacted]		D
05	Possessed, sold, used, or was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage-TEC §37.006(a)(2)(D) and 37.007(b)(2)(A)	On campus (01)	M	[redacted]		D
	TEC §37.006(a)(2)(D) and 37.007(b)(2)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)	M			D
	TEC §37.006(a)(2)(D) and 37.007(b)(2)(A)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)	M			D
06	Abuse of a volatile chemical-TEC §37.006(a)(2)(E) and 37.007(b)(2)(B)	On campus (01)	M	[redacted]		D
	TEC §37.006(a)(2)(E) and 37.007(b)(2)(B)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)	M			D
	TEC §37.006(a)(2)(E) and 37.007(b)(2)(B)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)	M			D
07	Public lewdness or indecent exposure-TEC §37.006(a)(2)(F)	On campus (01)	M	[redacted]		
	TEC §37.006(a)(2)(F)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)	M			
	TEC §37.006(a)(2)(F)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)	M			
08	Retaliation against school employee-TEC §37.006(b) and 37.007(d)	On campus (01)	M	[redacted]		D*
	TEC §37.006(b) and 37.007(d)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)	M			D*
	TEC §37.006(b) and 37.007(d)	School Related/Sponsor	M			D*

		ed Activity Off Campus (03)				
	TEC §37.006(b) and 37.007(d)	Off Campus, no school related/sponsored activity (04)	M			D*
09	Based on conduct occurring off campus and while the student is not in attendance at a school-sponsored or school-related activity for felony offenses in Title 5, Penal Code-TEC §37.006(c) , TEC §37.007(b)(4), and TEC §37.0081	Off Campus, no school related/sponsored activity (04)	M			D
10	Based on conduct occurring off campus and while the student is not in attendance at a school-sponsored or school-related activity for felony offenses not in Title 5, Penal Code-TEC §37.006(d) and TEC §37.007(b)(4)	Off Campus, no school related/sponsored activity (04)			D	D
11	Brought a Firearm to School – TEC 37.007(e) or Unlawful Carrying of a Handgun under Penal Code 46.02 – TEC 37.007(a)(1)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(B)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(a)(1) and/or 37.007(e)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
12	Unlawful Carrying of an Illegal Knife under Penal Code 46.02 – TEC	On campus (01)		M		

	37.007(a)(1) (Illegal knife - blade longer than 5.5 inches)					
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(a)(1)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
13	Unlawful Carrying of a Club under Penal Code 46.02 – TEC 37.007(a)(1)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(a)(1)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
14	Conduct Containing the Elements of an Offense Relating to Prohibited Weapons Under Penal Code 46.05 – TEC 37.007(a)(1)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(a)(1)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school				D

		related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				
16	Arson-TEC §37.007(a)(2)(B)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(a)(2)(B)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
17	Murder, capital murder, criminal attempt to commit murder, or capital murder-TEC §37.007(a)(2)(C)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(a)(2)(C)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
18	Indecency with a child-TEC §37.007(a)(2)(D)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(a)(2)(D)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		

	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
19	Aggravated kidnapping-TEC §37.007(a)(2)(E)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(a)(2)(E)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
21	Violation of student code of conduct not included under TEC §37.006, 37.007, or 37.002(c)	Not Applicable (00)			D	
22	Criminal mischief (felony violation)- TEC §37.007(f)	Not Applicable (00)				D
23	Emergency Placement/Expulsion-TEC §37.019	Not Applicable (00)			D	D
26	Terroristic threat-TEC §37.006(a)(1) or 37.007(b)(1)	On campus (01)	M			D
	TEC §37.006(a)(1) or 37.007(b)(1)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)	M			D
	TEC §37.006(a)(1) or 37.007(b)(1)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)	M			D
	TEC §37.006(a)(1) or 37.007(b)(1)	Off Campus, no school	M			D

		related/sponsored activity (04)				
	TEC §37.006(a)(1) or 37.007(b)(1)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)	M			D
27	Assault under Penal Code Section 22.01(a)(1) against a school district employee or volunteer- TEC §36.006(a)(2)(B) and/or TEC §37.007(b)(2)(C)	On campus (01)	M			D
	TEC §36.006(a)(2)(B) and/or TEC §37.007(b)(2)(C)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)	M			D
	TEC §36.006(a)(2)(B) and/or TEC §37.007(b)(2)(C)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)	M			D
28	Assault under Penal Code Section 22.01(a)(1) against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer-TEC §37.006(a)(2)(B)	On campus (01)	M			
	TEC §37.006(a)(2)(B)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)	M			
	TEC §37.006(a)(2)(B)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)	M			
29	Aggravated assault under Penal Code Section 22.02 against a school district employee or volunteer-TEC §37.007(d)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(d)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)		M		
	TEC §37.007(d)	School Related/Sponsor		M		

		ed Activity Off Campus (03)				
	TEC §37.007(d)	Off Campus, no school related/sponsored activity (04)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)		M		
30	Aggravated assault under Penal Code Section 22.02 against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer-TEC §37.007(a)(2)(A)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(a)(2)(A)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
31	Sexual assault under Penal Code Section 22.011 or aggravated sexual assault under 22.021 against a school district employee or volunteer-TEC §37.007(d)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(d)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(d)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at				D

		school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				
32	Sexual assault under Penal Code Section 22.011 or aggravated sexual assault under 22.021 against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer-TEC §37.007(a)(2)(A)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(a)(2)(A)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
33	Possessed, purchased, used or accepted a cigarette or tobacco product as defined in the Health and Safety Code, Section 3.01, chapter 161.252	Not Applicable (00)			D	
34	School-related gang violence	Not Applicable (00)			D	
35	False Alarm/False Report – TEC §§37.006(a)(1) and 37.007(b)(1)	On campus (01)	M			D
	TEC §§37.006(a)(1) and 37.007(b)(1)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)	M			D
	TEC §§37.006(a)(1) and 37.007(b)(1)	School Related/Sponsor	M			D

		ed Activity Off Campus (03)				
	TEC §§37.006(a)(1) and 37.007(b)(1)	Off Campus, no school related/sponsored activity (04)	M			D
	TEC §§37.006(a)(1) and 37.007(b)(1)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)	M			D
36	Felony Controlled Substance Violation-TEC §37.007(a)(3)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(a)(3)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
37	Felony alcohol violation-TEC §37.007(a)(3)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(a)(3)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
41	Fighting/Mutual Combat-Excludes all offenses under Penal Code §22.01	Not Applicable (00)			D	
42	Truancy (failure to attend school)-Parent contributing to truancy-TEC §25.093(a)	Not Applicable (00)				

44	Truancy(failure to attend school)-Student with 10 unexcused absences-TFC §65.003	Not Applicable (00)					
45	Truancy(failure to attend school)-Student failure to enroll in school-TEC §25.085	Not Applicable (00)					
46	Aggravated Robbery-TEC §37.007(a)(2)(F), TEC §37.006(C)-(D) (HB 9680)	On campus (01)			M		
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)					D
	TEC §37.007(a)(2)(F)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)			M		
	TEC 37.0081	Off Campus, no school related/sponsored activity (04)					D
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)					D
47	Manslaughter – TEC §37.007(a)(2)(G)	On campus (01)			M		
		Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)					D
	TEC §37.007(a)(2)(G)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)			M		
	TEC 37.0081	Off Campus, no school related/sponsored activity (04)					D
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at					D

		school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				
48	Criminally Negligent Homicide – TEC §37.007(a)(2)(H)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(a)(2)(H)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.0081	Off Campus, no school related/sponsored activity (04)				D
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
49	Engages In Deadly Conduct – TEC §37.007(b)(2)(D)	On campus (01)			D	D
	TEC §37.007(b)(2)(D)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)			D	D
	TEC §37.007(b)(2)(D)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)			D	D
55	Student Is Required To Register As A Sex Offender Under Chapter 62 Of The Code Of Criminal Procedure And Is Under Court Supervision - TEC §37.304. The offense(s) for which the student is required to register as a sex offender must have occurred on or after Sept. 1, 2007	Not Applicable (00)	M			D

56	Student Is Required To Register As A Sex Offender Under Chapter 62 Of The Code Of Criminal Procedure And Is Not Under Court Supervision - TEC §37.305. The offense(s) for which the student is required to register as a sex offender must have occurred on or after Sept. 1, 2007	Not Applicable (00)			D	
57	Continuous Sexual Abuse Of Young Child Or Children Under Penal Code §21.02 Occurring on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property – TEC §37.007(a)(2)(I)	On campus (01)		M		
	TEC §37.007(b)(3)(A)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(a)(2)(I)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)		M		
	TEC 37.007(i)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
58	Breach of Computer Security – TEC §37.007(b)(5)	On campus (01)				D
	TEC §37.007(b)(5)	Off Campus, within 300 ft (02)				D
	TEC §37.007(b)(5)	School Related/Sponsored Activity Off Campus (03)				D
	TEC §37.007(b)(5)	Off Campus, no school related/sponsored activity (04)				D

	TEC §37.007(b)(5)	On school property, or at school related/sponsored activity, of another school district (05)				D
59	Serious Misbehavior, as defined by TEC §37.007(c), while expelled to/placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)	On campus (01)				D

* Retaliation against school employee or volunteer coupled with an offense in TEC 37.007 (a) or (d).

- Not allowed by TEC Chapter 37

- Not specified by TEC Chapter 37. Action for these items must be authorized by the local Student Code of Conduct

Appendix H

Table H.1: Total District Enrollment by Race 2011-2015

Race/Ethnicity	**2010-2011**	**2011-2012**	**2012-2013**	**2013-2014**	**2014-2015**
American Indian	218 (0.5%)	200 (0.4%)	192 (0.2%)	188 (0.4%)	189 (0.4%)
Asian	5,185 (12.0%)	5,439 (11.9%)	5,900 (12.6%)	6,384 (13.5%)	6,389 (13.5%)
African American	4,097 (9.1%)	4,120 (9.0%)	4,143 (8.9%)	4,048 (8.6%)	4,070 (8.6%)
Latino/a	13,537 (30.1%)	13,839 (30.2%)	14,162 (30.4%)	14,333 (30.3%)	14,340 (30.3%)
Native Hawaiian	82 (0.2%)	89 (0.2%)	90 (0.2%)	79 (0.2%)	95 (0.2%)
Two or More	1,795 (3.9%)	1,904 (4.2%)	1,913 (4.1%)	2,034 (4.3%)	2,035 (4.3%)
White	20,120 (44.7%)	20,158 (44.1%)	20,266 (43.4%)	20,185 (42.7%)	20,209 (42.7%)
Total Enrollment	**45,034**	**45,749**	**46,666**	**47,251**	**47,327**

Table H.2: Total Campus Enrollment by Race 2011-2015 (Rover)

Race/Ethnicity	**2010-2011**	**2011-2012**	**2012-2013**	**2013-2014**	**2014-2015**
American Indian	12 (0.5%)	12 (0.4%)	16 (0.6%)	11 (0.4%)	15 (0.5%)
Asian	125 (5.5%)	144 (5.0%)	150 (5.4%)	145 (5.3%)	147 (5.4%)
African American	329 (14.3%)	411 (14.4%)	378 (13.6%)	397 (14.6%)	385 (14.0%)
Latino/a	840 (36.6%)	1,019 (35.7%)	980 (35.2%)	921 (33.9%)	992 (36.1%)
Native Hawaiian	N/A	5 (0.2%)	5 (0.2%)	7 (0.3%)	11 (0.4%)
Two or More	87 (3.8%)	115 (4.0%)	112 (4.0%)	131 (4.8%)	140 (5.1%)
White	900 (39.2%)	1,149 (40.2%)	1,140 (41.0%)	1,106 (40.7%)	1,056 (38.5%)
Total Enrollment	**2,293**	**2,855**	**2,781**	**2,718**	**2,746**

Table H.3: Total Campus Enrollment by Race 2011-2015 (Spark)

Race/Ethnicity	**2010-2011**	**2011-2012**	**2012-2013**	**2013-2014**	**2014-2015**
American Indian	18 (0.7%)	14 (0.6%)	13 (0.5%)	7 (0.3%)	11 (0.4%)
Asian	117 (4.7%)	106 (4.6%)	110 (4.6%)	120 (4.9%)	120 (4.6%)
African American	374 (15.0%)	389 (17.0%)	428 (18.0%)	409 (16.6%)	418 (16.1%)
Latino/a	1,062 (42.7%)	1,025 (44.8%)	1,044 (43.9%)	1,104 (44.9%)	1,164 (44.8%)
Native Hawaiian	N/A	N/A	5 (0.2%)	N/A	6 (0.2%)
Two or More	88 (3.5%)	72 (3.1%)	83 (3.5%)	85 (3.5%)	87 (3.3%)
White	826 (33.2%)	682 (29.8%)	694 (29.2%)	734 (29.8%)	794 (30.5%)
Total Enrollment	**2,485**	**2,288**	**2,377**	**2,459**	**2,600**

Compiled from Texas Education Agency PEIMS Standard Student Enrollment Reports (TEA, 2016).
*Counts less than 5 and greater than 0 are marked with the value N/A to comply with FERPA.

Table H.4: Total Percent and Number of District's DAEP Removals of African American, Hispanic, and White Students (2011-2015)

Race/Ethnicity	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
African American	3.49% *(143)*	3.54% *(146)*	3.36% *(139)*	2.74% *(111)*	2.51% *(102)*
Latino/a	2.25% *(305)*	1.96% *(271)*	1.62% *(229)*	1.36% *(195)*	1.21% *(173)*

White	1.13% *(228)*	0.97% *(196)*	0.80% *(163)*	0.84% *(170)*	0.62% *(126)*

Compiled from Texas Education Agency PEIMS Standard Student Enrollment Reports (TEA, 2016).

Table H.5: Total Percent and Number of Discretionary DAEP Removal by Race 2011-2015 ("Rover" High School)

Race/Ethnicity	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
African American	0.91% *(3/329)*	2.92% *(12/411)*	0.79% *(3/378)*	0.50% *(2/397)*	0.52% *(2/385)*
Latino/a	1.31% *(11/840)*	1.28% *(13/1019)*	0.82% *(8/980)*	0.11% *(1/921)*	-
White	0.33% *(3/900)*	0.35% *(4/1149)*	0.70% *(8/1140)*	0.18% *(2/1106)*	0.09% *(1/1056)*

Collected from the School District's Discipline Data. Percentages based on student enrollment by race

Table H.6: Total Percent and Number of Discretionary DAEP Removal by Race 2011-2015 ("Spark" High School)

Race/Ethnicity	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
African American	1.07% *(4/374)*	1.29% *(5/389)*	0.70% *(3/428)*	1.47% *(6/409)*	0.72% *(3/418)*
Latino/a	0.28% *(3/1062)*	0.68% *(7/1025)*	0.67% *(7/1044)*	0.27% *(3/1104)*	-
White	0.12% *(1/826)*	1.03% *(7/682)*	0.43% *(3/694)*	0.27% *(2/734)*	0.13% *(1/794)*

Collected from the School District's Discipline Data. Percentages based on student enrollment by race

Table H.7: Rover High School Staff Information

Staff Information	Count/Average Percent				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Total Staff	137.6 (100.0%)	188.0 (100.0%)	240.4 (100.0%)	235.3 (100.0%)	222.7 (100.0%)
Professional Staff:	128.5 (93.4%)	180.3 (95.9%)	230.9 (96.0%)	225.8 (96.0%)	212.0 (95.2%)
Teachers	98.5 (71.6%)	139.2 (74.1%)	187.3 (77.9%)	186.3 (79.2%)	178.9 (80.3%)
Professional Support	24.0 (17.4%)	33.2 (17.7%)	36.5 (15.2%)	31.5 (13.4%)	25.3 (11.3%)
Campus Administration	6.0 (4.4%)	7.8 (4.2%)	7.0 (2.9%)	8.0 (3.4%)	7.8 (3.5%)
Teachers by Ethnicity:					
African American	6.0 (6.1%)	10.9 (7.8%)	13.0 (6.9%)	10.9 (5.9%)	11.0 (6.1%)
Hispanic (Latino/a)	17.5 (17.7%)	21.0 (15.1%)	31.6 (16.9%)	28.7 (15.4%)	33.0 (18.4%)
White	68.8 (69.8%)	101.0 (72.6%)	132.7 (70.8%)	135.1 (72.5%)	124.4 (69.5%)
American Indian	0.0 (0.0%)	0.0 (0.0%)	1.0 (0.5%)	1.0 (0.5%)	2.0 (1.1%)
Asian	4.2 (4.3%)	4.1 (3.0%)	7.0 (3.7%)	7.5 (4.1%)	6.5 (3.6%)
Native Hawaiian	0.0 (0.0%)	0.0 (0.0%)	0.0 (0.0%)	0.0 (0.0%)	0.0 (0.0%)
Two or More Races	2.0 (2.0%)	2.2 (1.6%)	2.0 (1.1%)	3.0 (1.6%)	2.0 (1.1%)
Teachers by Sex:					
Males	41.2 (41.9%)	49.6 (35.6%)	69.8 (37.2%)	71.4 (38.3%)	74.2 (41.5%)
Females	57.3 (58.1%)	89.7 (64.4%)	117.6 (62.8%)	114.9 (61.7%)	104.7 (58.5%)
Teachers Yrs. of Experience:					
Beginning Teachers	8.7 (8.8%)	18.7 (13.4%)	18.2 (9.7%)	6.9 (3.7%)	7.9 (4.4%)
1-5 Yrs. Experience	40.9 (41.5%)	55.2 (39.7%)	80.7 (43.1%)	83.7 (44.9%)	64.6 (36.1%)
6-10 Yrs. Experience	27.4 (27.8%)	35.9 (25.8%)	48.6 (25.9%)	53.4 (28.7%)	56.5 (31.6%)

11-20 Yrs. Experience	18.0 (18.3%)	24.2 (17.4%)	28.8 (15.4%)	32.8 (17.6%)	38.1 (21.3%)
Over 20 Yrs. Experience	3.6 (3.6%)	5.2 (3.7%)	11.2 (6.0%)	9.5 (5.1%)	11.9 (6.6%)

Tables H.8: Spark High School Staff Information

Staff Information	Count/Average Percent				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Total Staff	239.5 (100.0%)	218.9 (100.0%)	213.1 (100.0%)	216.6 (100.0%)	227.7 (100.0%)
Professional Staff:	214.4 (89.5%)	201.8 (92.2%)	196.2 (92.1%)	198.9 (91.8%)	206.7 (90.8%)
Teachers	188.4 (78.7%)	169.3 (77.3%)	163.3 (76.6%)	(167.0 77.1%)	173.7 (76.3%)
Professional Support	19.0 (7.9%)	24.5 (11.2%)	26.0 (12.2%)	24.9 (11.5%)	25.0 (11.0%)
Campus Administration	7.0 (2.9%)	8.0 (3.7%)	6.9 (3.2%)	7.0 (3.2%)	8.0 (3.5%)
Teachers by Ethnicity:					
African American	5.7 (3.0%)	7.0 (4.1%)	7.0 (4.3%)	9.0 (5.4%)	10.7 (6.1%)
Hispanic (Latino/a)	24.4 (13.0%)	18.7 (11.1%)	19.3 (11.8%)	21.0 (12.6%)	23.2 (13.4%)
White	149.5 (79.3%)	137.6 (81.3%)	132.0 (80.9%)	130.0 (77.8%)	128.0 (73.7%)
American Indian	1.8 (1.0%)	1.0 (0.6%)	1.0 (0.6%)	1.0 (0.6%)	1.9 (1.1%)
Asian	2.0 (1.1%)	1.0 (0.6%)	1.0 (0.6%)	3.0 (1.8%)	6.9 (3.9%)
Native Hawaiian	0.0 (0.0%)	0.0 (0.0%)	0.0 (0.0%)	0.0 (0.0%)	0.0 (0.0%)
Two or More Races	5.0 (2.7%)	4.0 (2.4%)	3.0 (1.8%)	3.0 (1.8%)	3.0 (1.7%)
Teachers by Sex:					
Males	79.6 (42.3%)	78.3 (46.2%)	79.7 (48.8%)	79.3 (47.5%)	82.0 (47.2%)
Females	108.8 (57.7%)	91.0 (53.8%)	83.6 (51.2%)	87.7 (52.5%)	91.7 (52.8%)
Teachers Yrs. of Experience:					
Beginning Teachers	15.5 (8.2%)	11.4 (6.7%)	12.5 (7.6%)	11.1 (6.7%)	18.1 (10.4%)
1-5 Yrs. Experience	73.2 (38.8%)	59.6 (35.2%)	51.0 (31.2%)	50.8 (30.4%)	50.6 (29.1%)
6-10 Yrs. Experience	29.0 (15.4%)	29.7 (17.5%)	34.4 (21.1%)	34.1 (20.4%)	32.4 (18.7%)
11-20 Yrs. Experience	52.7 (28.0%)	54.1 (32.0%)	51.2 (31.4%)	53.9 (32.3%)	48.7 (28.0%)
Over 20 Yrs. Experience	18.0 (9.6%)	14.5 (8.6%)	14.2 (8.7%)	17.0 (10.2%)	23.9 (13.8%)

TEA Academic Excellence Indicator System (AIES) Report: 2010-2011 & 2011-2012
TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR): 2012-2013, 2013-2014, & 2014-2015

Table H.9: Disciplinary Action Reason Code- Rover

Action Codes	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
01 - Persistent Dis Beh	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
02 - Conduct/Felony	2	1.9	1.9	2.9
10 - Off Campus Not T5	1	1.0	1.0	3.8
21 - Oth Stud Code Con	13	12.5	12.5	16.3
33 - Tobacco Violation	1	1.0	1.0	17.3

	41 - Fight/Mutual Combat	13	12.5	12.5	29.8
	430 - Per Misbehavior	5	4.8	4.8	34.6
	460 - Disrespect For Staff	1	1.0	1.0	35.6
	470 - Inapprop Familiarity	2	1.9	1.9	37.5
	510 - Obscene/Unauthor Mat	2	1.9	1.9	39.4
	540 - Refusal To Comply	5	4.8	4.8	44.2
	570 - Aggr Action	29	27.9	27.9	72.1
	670 - Theft/Poss/Sale Oth	14	13.5	13.5	85.6
	680 - Disrupt Sch Env/Proc	7	6.7	6.7	92.3
	710 - Threats/Intimidation	7	6.7	6.7	99.0
	730 - Harassment	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	104	100.0	100.0	

Samples of the referral comments or reports and the disciplinary action codes that justified the student removal to the DAEP, including the number of days they were assigned are shown below.

Table H.10: Disciplinary Action Reason Code, Referral Comments, and Days Assigned-Rover

Disciplinary Action Reason Code	Referral Comment/Report	Length of Days Assigned DAEP
570- Aggressive Action	Student was frustrated with a student who had been bugging him verbally in class. When they left class, he hit the student two times in the head.	42
570- Aggressive Action	Student was told that her boyfriend had cheated on her. She confronted him and hit him in the nose.	27
670- Theft/Possession/Sale of Others Property	Student admitted to going to restroom (w)classmate who had stolen teacher's cell phone to take out SIM card from phone. He did and threw SIM in trash. SIM was broken in 1/2 when recovered.	30

670- Theft/Possession/Sale of Others Property	Student went into the boys locker room and took a cell phone that did not belong to him. When confronted, he returned the phone but without the SIM card. One of the assistant principal and the SRO asked him repeatedly if he had the SIM card and he said no each time, until finally turning the SIM card over to the owner of the phone.	30
21- Other Student Code of Conduct	Student brought an air-soft gun to school to show his friends. It was seen by students on campus and was reported.	60
21- Other Student Code of Conduct	The referred student pushed an administrator to get to another female student after being directed to stop.	30

Table H.11: Disciplinary Action Reason Code- Spark

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
01 - Persistent Dis Beh	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
02 - Conduct/Felony	5	6.4	6.4	9.0
21 - Oth Stud Code Con	1	1.3	1.3	10.3
22 - Criminal Mischief	1	1.3	1.3	11.6
30 - Aggr assault:not Empl	1	1.3	1.3	12.9
33 - Tobacco Violation	1	1.3	1.3	14.2
34 - Gang-Rel Vio/3+studs	1	1.3	1.3	15.5
36 - Felony Contrld Sub	1	1.3	1.3	16.8
41 - Fight/Mutual combat	5	6.4	6.4	23.2
430 - Per Misbehavior	25	32.0	32.0	55.2
460 - Disrespect For Staff	1	1.3	1.3	56.5
540 - Refusal To Comply	3	3.8	3.8	60.3
550 - Failure To Attend	1	1.3	1.3	61.6
560 - Profanity/Inap Lang	4	5.1	5.1	66.7
570 - Aggr Action	7	8.9	8.9	75.6
590 - Excessive Tardys	1	1.3	1.3	76.9
620 - Leaving Sch Grounds	1	1.3	1.3	78.2
670 - Theft/Poss/Sale Oth	4	5.1	5.1	83.3

680 - Disrupt Sch Env/Proc	4	5.1	5.1	88.4
690 - Excessive Absences	4	5.1	5.1	93.5
710 - Threats/Intimidation	2	2.6	2.6	96.1
720 - Bullying	2	2.6	2.6	98.7
730 - Harassment	1	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	78	100.0	100.0	

Table H.12: Disciplinary Action Reason Code, Referral Comments, and Days Assigned-Spark

Disciplinary Action Reason Code	Referral Comment/Report	Length of Days Assigned DAEP
430 - Per Misbehavior	Got in teachers face during class and yelled at her you need to stop talking to me. Then he told teacher "you are old and can't understand English" and told teacher " I do what I want, when I want."	60
430 - Per Misbehavior	Student left class without permission. She then left the office area to go to her Focus room **(SPED student)**. After speaking with the Focus staff, she refused to go to her next class and had to be removed from the room by an SRO.	30
41-Fight/Mutual Combat	Student was involved in a mutual combat fight w/another female student. Student caused an extreme disruption of the school learning environment. SRO's were called in, officers pepper sprayed students. Student was ticketed for fighting.	30
41-Fight/Mutual Combat	Student was involved in a mutual combat with another female student in the cafeteria before school.	18
02-Conduct/Felony	Student entered the principal's office and stole items including multiple packs of hall passes and a backpack	45
02-Conduct/Felony	Student was changing other students' attendance in district database	45

References

Advancement Project/Civil Rights Project. (2000, February). Opportunities Suspended: The Devastating Consequences of Zero Tolerance and School Discipline. Cambridge, MA: Author

Advancement Project (2005). *Education on lockdown: The school to jailhouse track.* Washington, D.C.

Allen, K. P. (2010). Classroom management, bullying, and teacher practices. *The Professional Educator*, *34*(1), 1.

Anderson, S. (2001). The profession and discipline of architecture: Practice and education. *The discipline of architecture*, 292-305.

Armour, M. (2016). Restorative practices: Righting the wrongs of exclusionary school discipline. *School Inequality: Challenges and Solutions, Allen Chair Issue: School Discipline Policies*, 999.

Aron, L. Y. (2006). *An overview of alternative education.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

Ashford, R. W. (2000). Can zero tolerance keep our schools safe? *Principal, 80(2)*, 28-31.

Associated Press (2006a). Candidate proposes using textbooks as shields. Retrieved February 12, 2017, from HYPERLINK https://www.orangepower.com/threads/cnn-candidate-proposes-using-textbooks-

as-shields.27659/ https://www.orangepower.com/threads/cnn-candidate-proposes-using-textbooks-as-shields.27659/

Associated Press (2006b). Wisconsin lawmaker urges arming teachers. Retrieved February 12, 2017, from HYPERLINK http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-10-05-arming-teachers_x.htm http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-10-05-arming-teachers_x.htm

Ayres, L., Kavanaugh, K., & Knafl, K. A. (2003). Within-case and across-case approaches to qualitative data analysis. *Qualitative Health Research, 13*, 871-883.

Babbie. E. (2008). The Basics of Social Science Research. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Balfanz, R., Byrnes, V., & Fox, J. (2013). Sent Home and Put Off-Track: The Antecedents, Disproportionalities, and Consequences of Being.

Banks, K. J. (2018). Sensemaking as a Framework for Understanding How Middle School Assistant Principals as Social Justice Leaders Adjudicate Discipline Referrals to Disrupt the Racial Discipline Gap (Doctoral dissertation).

Bechuke, A. L., & Debeila, J. R. (2012). Applying choice theory in fostering discipline: Managing and modifying challenging learners behaviours in South African schools. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, *2*(22), 240-255.

Bernhardt, P. E. (2013). The advancement via individual determination (AVID) program: Providing cultural capital and college access to low-income students. *School Community Journal*, *23*(1), 203.

Berger, Peter L., and Luckmann, Thomas (1966). The Social Construction of Reality. New York: Doubleday.

Bettelheim, B. (1985). Punishment versus discipline. *The Atlantic Monthly, 37*(6), 51-55.

Bireda, M. R. (2002). *Eliminating racial profiling in school discipline: Cultures in conflict*. Scarecrow Press.

Booker, K., & Mitchell, A. (2011). Patterns in recidivism and discretionary placement in disciplinary alternative education: The impact of gender, ethnicity, age, and special education status. *Education and Treatment of Children, 34(2),* 193-208.

Booth, E. A., Marchbanks III, M. P., Carmichael, D., & Fabelo, T. (2012). Comparing campus discipline rates: A multivariate approach for identifying schools with significantly different than expected exclusionary discipline rates. *Journal of Applied Research on Children: Informing Policy for Children at Risk, 3*(2), 6.

Borum, R., Cornell, D. G., Modzeleski, W., & Jimerson, S. R. (2010). What can be done about school shootings? A review of the evidence. *Educational Researcher, 39*(1), 27-37.

Boudes, T., & Laroche, H. (2009). Taking off the heat: Narrative sensemaking in post-crisis inquiry reports. *Organization Studies, 30*(4), 377-396.

Bowditch, C. (1993). Getting rid of troublemakers: High school disciplinary procedures and the production of dropouts. *Social Problems, 40(4),* 493-509.

Bowles, S. & Gintis, H. (1976). *Schooling in capitalist America.* New York, NY: Basic Books.

Brooks, K., Schiraldi, V., & Ziedenberg, J. (2000). School house hype: Two years later. Washington, DC: Justice Policy Institute.

Brown, A.D., and Jones, M. (1998), "Doomed to failure: narratives of inevitability and conspiracy in a failed IS project," Organization Studies, Vol. 19, pp. 73-88.

Brown, A. D., Stacey, P., & Nandhakumar, J. (2008). Making sense of sensemaking narratives. *Human relations*, *61*(8), 1035-1062.

Burleson changes stance on student attack training (2006, October 25). NBC News. Retrieved February 12, 2017, from HYPERLINK "http://www.nbcnews.com/id/15253321/ns/us_news-education/t/students-taught-attack-if-gunman-appears/" \l ".WKAwefkrK00" http://www.nbcnews.com/id/15253321/ns/us_news-education/t/students-taught-attack-if-gunman-appears/#.WKAwefkrK00

Butler, B. R., Lewis, C. W., Moore III, J. L., & Scott, M. E. (2012). Assessing the odds: Disproportional discipline practices and implications for educational stakeholders. *The Journal of Negro Education, Vol. 81, No. 1*, 11-24.

Cable, K. E., Plucker, J. A., & Spradlin, T. E. (2009). Alternative schools: What's in a name? *Education Policy Brief, Volume 7, Number 4, Center for Evaluation and Education Policy. Indiana University*, 12.

Cameron, M. (2006). Managing school discipline and implications for school social workers: A review of the literature. *Children & Schools, 28(4)*, 219-227.

Carmichael-Murphy, M. F., Mathies, L. M., & Young, E. E. (2016). Engaging school leaders, empowering voices, & exposing strengths: lived experiences of the discipline gap and school-to-prison pipeline.

Casella, R. (2003). Zero tolerance policy in schools: Rationale, consequences, and alternatives. *The Teachers College Record, 105(5)*, 872-892.

Children's Defense Fund (1975). *School suspensions: Are they helping children?* Cambridge, MA: Washington Research Project.

Clegg, S., & Bailey, J. R. (Eds.). (2007). *International encyclopedia of organization studies*. Sage Publications.

Coburn, C. E. (2005). Shaping teacher sensemaking: School leaders and the enactment of reading policy. *Educational policy*, *19*(3), 476-509.

Coburn, C. E., & Woulfin, S. L. (2012). Reading coaches and the relationship between policy and practice. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *47*(1), 5-30.

Cochran-Smith, M. (2005). The new teacher education: for better or for worse? Educational Researcher, 34(7), 3–17.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Zeichner, K. M. (2005). Studying teacher education: The report of the AERA panel on research and teacher education. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Cole, H. A., & Heilig, J. V. (2011). Developing a school-based youth court: A potential alternative to the school to prison pipeline. *JL & Educ.*, *40*, 305.

Cornell, D. (2006). School violence: Fears versus facts. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Cortez, A., & Robledo Montecel, M. (1999). *Disciplinary alternative education programs in Texas - What is known; What is needed. A Policy Brief.* San Antonio: Intercultural Development Research Association Institute for Policy and Leadership.

Costenbader, V., & Markson, S. (1998). School suspension: A study with secondary school students. *Journal of School Psychology, 36,* 59-82.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Crotty, M. (2015). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Sage.

Crouch, M. & McKenzie, H. (2006). The logic of small samples in interview-based qualitative research. Social Science Information, 45(4), 483-499.

Cutcliffe, J. R. (2000). Methodological issues in grounded theory. J*ournal of Advanced Nursing, 31*, 1476-1484.

Cutcliffe, J. R. (2003). Reconsidering reflexivity: Introducing the case for intellectual entrepreneurship. *Qualitative Health Research, 13,* 136-148.

Darensbourg, A., Perez, E., & Blake, J. J. (2010). Overrepresentation of African American males in exclusionary discipline: The role of school-based mental health professionals in dismantling the school to prison pipeline. *Journal of African American Males in Education*, *1*(3).

DeMatthews, D. E. (2012). *Principal sensemaking of inclusion: A multi-case study of five urban school principals* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park).

DeMatthews, D. (2016a). Effective leadership is not enough: Critical approaches to closing the racial discipline gap. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues, and Ideas, 89(1),* 7-13.

DeMatthews, D. E. (2016b). The racial discipline gap critically examining policy, culture, and leadership in a struggling urban district. *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership, 19(2),* 82-96.

DeMatthews, D. E., Carey, R. L., Olivarez, A., & Moussavi Saeedi, K. (2017). Guilty as charged? Principals' perspectives on disciplinary practices and the racial discipline gap. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *53*(4), 519-555.

Duke, D. L., & Griesdorn, J. (1999). Considerations in the design of alternative schools. *The Clearing House, 73(2),* 89-92. Duke, D. L. (2002). *Creating Safe Schools for All Children*. Allyn & Bacon, Order Processing Department, PO Box 11075, Des Moines, IA 50336.

Duncan, A. (2010). Key policy letters from the education secretary and deputy secretary. *US Department of Education.* Retrieved February 13, 2017, from *Web site:* https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/110607.html

Dupper, D. R., & Dingus, A. E. M. (2008). Corporal punishment in US public schools: A continuing challenge for school social workers. *Children & Schools*, *30*(4), 243-250.

Dupper, D. R., Theriot, M. T., & Craun, S. W. (2009). Reducing out-of-school suspensions: Practice guidelines for school social workers. *Children & Schools*, *31*(1), 6-14.

Evans. A.E. (2007a).Changing faces: Suburban school response to demographic change. *Education and Urban Society*, 39(3), 315-348.

Evans, A. E. (2007b). School leaders and their sensemaking about race and demographic change. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 43(2), 159-188.

Fabelo, T., Thompson, M. D., Plotkin, M., Carmichael, D., Marchbanks III, M. P., & Booth, E. A. (2011). *Breaking schools' rules: A statewide study of how school*

discipline relates to students' success and juvenile justice involvement. New York, NY: Council of State Governments Justice Center.

Fenning, P., & Rose, J. (2007). Overrepresentation of African American students in exclusionary discipline the role of school policy. *Urban Education, 42(6),* 536-559.

Feuerborn, L., Wallace, C., & Tyre, A. (2016). A qualitative analysis of middle and high school teacher perceptions of schoolwide positive behavior supports. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.98300716632591.

Fullan, M. (2014). *The principal: Three keys to maximizing impact*. John Wiley & Sons.

Gallup, G., Jr. (1999, May 20). Many teens report copycat-related problems at school in wake of Littleton shooting: Nearly half say their school has violent or violence-prone groups. Retrieved February 12, 2017, from HYPERLINK "http://www.gallup.com/poll/3838/many-teens-report-copycatrelated-problems-school-wake-little.aspx" http://www.gallup.com/poll/3838/many-teens-report-copycatrelated-problems-school-wake-little.aspx

Ganon-Shilon, S., & Schechter, C. (2017). Making sense of school leaders' sense-making. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *45*(4), 682-698.

Garrett, V. L. (2013). *School Leaders and the Application of Discipline for African American and Latino Students* (Doctoral dissertation, California State University, East Bay).

Gartrell, D. (1997). Beyond discipline to guidance. *Young Children*, *52*(6), 34-42.

Gearing, R. E. (2004). Bracketing in research: A typology. Qualitative Health Research, 14, 1429-1452.

Gioia, D. A., & Chittipeddi, K. (1991). Sensemaking and sensegiving in strategic change initiation. *Strategic management journal*, *12*(6), 433-448.

Glaser, B. G. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity: Advances in the methodology of grounded theory*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*.

Green, J. A. (2009). Changing past student discipline practices to create a district-wide discipline plan. *Education and Urban Society, Volume 41 Number 4*, 457-468.

Gregg, S. (1998). *Schools for disruptive students: A questionable alternative?* AEL Policy Briefs.

Gregg, S. (1998). Schools for disruptive students: A questionable alternative? *AEL Policy Briefs*, 1-9.

Gregory, A., Bell, J., & Pollock, M. (2016). How educators can eradicate disparities in school discipline. *Inequality in School Discipline* (pp. 39-58). Palgrave Macmillan U.S.

Gregory, A., Skiba, R. J., & Noguera, P. A. (2010). The achievement gap and the discipline gap: Two sides of the same coin? *Educational Researcher, 39(1)*, 59-68.

Guardino, C. A., & Fullerton, E. (2010). Changing behaviors by changing the classroom environment. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, *42*(6), 8-13.

Hadderman, M. (2002). Alternative Schools. Trends and Issues.

Hallett, R. E., & Venegas, K. M. (2011). Is increased access enough? Advanced placement courses, quality, and success in low-income urban schools. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, *34*(3), 468-487.

Harvard Civil Rights Project (2000). *Opportunities suspended: The devastating consequences of zero tolerance and school discipline policies.* Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project, Harvard University.

Harry, B., & Anderson, M. G. (1994). The disproportionate placement of African American males in special education programs: A critique of the process. *The Journal of Negro Education*, *63*(4), 602-619.

Heale, R., & Forbes, D. (2013). Understanding triangulation in research. *Evidence-Based Nursing*, ebnurs-2013.

Helms Mills, J., Thurlow, A., & Mills, A. J. (2010). Making sense of sensemaking: the critical sensemaking approach. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, *5*(2), 182-195.

Hesse-Biber, S. N., & Leavy, P. (Eds.). (2006). Emergent methods in social research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hirschfield, P. J., & Celinska, K. (2011). Beyond fear: Sociological perspectives on the criminalization of school discipline. *Sociology Compass*, *5*(1), 1-12.

Hoffman, S. (2014). Zero benefit estimating the effect of zero tolerance discipline polices on racial disparities in school discipline. *Educational Policy, 28(1),* 69-95.

Hollins, E. R., & Guzman, M. T. (2005). Research on preparing teachers for diverse populations. In M. Cochran-Smith, & K. M. Zeichner (Eds.), Studying teacher education: The report of the AERA panel on research and teacher education (pp. 477–548). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Horner, S. B., Fireman, G. D., & Wang, E. W. (2010). The relation of student behavior, peer status, race, and gender to decisions about school discipline using CHAID decision trees and regression modeling. *Journal of School Psychology*, *48*(2), 135-161.

IBM Corp. (Released 2015). IBM SPSS Statistics for Mac, Version 24.0. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.

Institute for Restoration Justice & Restorative Dialogue (IRJRD, September, 2016). https://irjrd.org/

Institute for the Study of Students at Risk {ISSR} (2001). Currents status of policies alternative education programs in Maine: Impact upon policies and practices for students with disabilities and students considered to be “at risk.” Final report, 2000-2001 project. Orono, Maine: University of Maine.

Isabella, L. A. (1992). Managing the challenges of trigger events: The mindsets governing adaptation to change. *Business Horizons*, *35*(5), 59-66.

Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher, 33(7),* 14-26.

Johnson, R. M. (2014). *Educator perceptions of the use of power and student responses to the use of power at a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP): One Texas perspective.*

Justice Policy Institute (2008). *Disparity by design.* Washington, DC: Justice Policy Institute.

Juszkiewicz, R., Ferreira, P. G., Feldman, H. A., Jaffe, A. H., & Davis, M. (2000). Juszkiewicz, R., Ferreira, P. G., Evidence for a low-density universe from the relative velocities of galaxies. *Science, 287(5450),* 109-112.

Kajs, L. T. (2006). Reforming the discipline management process in schools: An alternative approach to zero tolerance. *Educational Research Quarterly, 29*(4), 16.

Kaniuka, T. S. (2012). Toward an understanding of how teachers change during school reform: Considerations for educational leadership and school improvement. *Journal of Educational Change*, *13*(3), 327-346.

Kaufman, P., Chen, X., Choy, S. P., Ruddy, S. A., Miller, A. K., Fleury, J. K., Chandler,K. A., Rand, M. R., Klaus, P., & Planty, M. (2000). Indicators of school crime safety. *National Center for Education Statistics (ED). Washington, DC. Department of Justice. Washington, DC. Bureau of Justice Statistics*, p. 194.

Keleher, T. (2000). *Racial disparities related to school zero tolerance policies: Testimony to the US Commission on Civil Rights.* Oakland, CA: Applied Research Center. Retrieved from Applied Research Center, Oakland, CA.

Kelly, S. (2010). A Crisis of Authority in Predominantly Black Schools?. *Teachers College Record*, *112*(5), 1247-1274.

Kennedy, B. L., Murphy, A. S., & Jordan, A. (2017). Title I middle school administrators' beliefs and choices about using corporal punishment and exclusionary discipline. *American Journal of Education*, *123*(2), 000-000.

Knapp, M. S., & Feldman, S. B. (2012). Managing the intersection of internal and external accountability: Challenge for urban school leadership in the United States. *Journal of Educational Administration*, *50*(5), 666-694.

Leone, P. E., Christle, C. A., Nelson, C. M., Skiba, R., Frey, A., & Jolivette, K. (2003). School failure, race, and disability: Promoting positive outcomes, decreasing vulnerability for involvement with the juvenile delinquency system. *Juvenile Justice*, 12-13.

Levin, M. (2006, March). *Schooling a new class of criminals? Better disciplinary alternatives for Texas students.* Policy Perspective. Retrieved from Texas Public Policy Foundation, chrome-extension://mloajfnmjckfjbeeofcdaecbelnblden/ http://www.senate.state.tx.us/75r/Senate/Commit/c530/handouts06/092006.c530.LevinM.2.pdf

Lewis-Beck, M. S., Bryman, A., & Futing Liao, T. (2004). *The SAGE encyclopedia of social science research methods* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781412950589

Lewis, A. E., & Diamond, J. B. (2015). *Despite the best intentions: How racial inequality thrives in good schools*. Oxford University Press.

Lin, J. Y. (2000). The current deflation in China: Causes and policy options. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Economics & Business*, *4*(2), 4.

Lippa, A. P. (2016). *Sensemaking as a framework for understanding how aspiring anti-racist leaders enact their learnings from a principal preparation program to disrupt the racial discipline gap* (Doctoral dissertation).

Losen, D. J. (2010). *The school-to-prison pipeline.* Presentation for The Civil Rights Project.

Losen, D. J. (2011). *Discipline policies, successful schools, and racial justice.* Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center.

Losen, D. J. (2013). Discipline policies, successful schools, racial justice, and the law. *Family Court Review*, *51*(3), 388-400.

Losen, D. J. (2016, July 7). *Discipline policies, successful schools, and racial justice.* Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved from http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/discipline-policies

Losen, D. J., & Gillespie, J. (2012). *Opportunities suspended: The disparate impact of disciplinary exclusion from school.* Center for Civil Rights Remedies. The Civil Rights Project. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA.

Losen, D. J., Hodson, C. L., Keith, I. I., Michael, A., Morrison, K., & Belway, S. (2015). *Are we closing the school discipline gap? K-12 racial disparities in school discipline.* Center for Civil Rights Remedies. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA.

Losen, D. J., & Skiba, R. J. (2010). Suspended education: Urban middle schools in crisis.

Marbley, A. F., Malott, K. M., Flaherty, A., & Frederick, H. (2011). Three issues, three approaches, three calls to action: Multicultural social justice in the schools. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology, 3*(1), 59.

Marchbanks III, M. P., Blake, J. J., Booth, E. A., Carmichael, D., Seibert, A. L., & Fabelo, T. (2015). The economic effects of exclusionary discipline on grade retention and high school dropout. *Closing the school discipline gap: Equitable remedies for excessive exclusion*, 59-74.

Martin, W. M. (2000). Does zero mean zero? Balancing policy with procedure in the fight against weapons at school. *American School Board Journal, 187(3)*, 39-41.

Maxwell, J.A. (2005). Qualitative research design: An interactive approach (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

McAndrews, T. (2001). Zero tolerance policies. *ERIC Digest, Number 146*, 1-7.

McCarthy, J. D., & Hoge, D. R. (1987). The social construction of school punishment: Racial disadvantage out of universalistic process. *Social Forces, 65(4)*, 1101-1120.

McCauley, D. (2007). The impact of advanced placement and dual enrollment programs on college graduation.

McCord, R., Hager, J., & Mattocks, T. C. (2007). *Zero tolerance: Balancing an uncertain expulsion policy*. Connexions Web. Retrieved from http://cnx.org/contents/iZjjBJKf@1/Zero-Tolerance-Balancing-an-Un

McCreight, C. (1999). *Best practices for disciplinary alternative education programs in Texas.* Oakland, CA: Applied Research Center.

McIntosh, K., Girvan, E. J., Horner, R., & Smolkowski, K. (2014). Education not incarceration: A conceptual model for reducing racial and ethnic disproportionality in school discipline.

Mertens, D. M. (2015). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Metze, P. S. (2012). Plugging the school to prison pipeline by addressing cultural racism in public education discipline. *UC Davis J. Juv. L. & Pol'y*, *16*, 203.

Miles, M. B. (86). Huberman. AM (1994). Qualitative data analysis. *A sourcebook of new methods, Beverly Hills*.

Miles, A. & Huberman, M. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: A new sourcebook of methods (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Mitchell, M. M., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2013). Examining classroom influences on student perceptions of school climate: The role of classroom management and exclusionary discipline strategies. *Journal of School Psychology*, *51*(5), 599-610.

Monroe, C. R. (2006). African American boys and the discipline gap: Balancing educators' uneven hand. *Educational Horizons*, *84*(2), 102-111.

Morrison, G. M., Anthony, S., Storino, M. H., Cheng, J. J., Furlong, M. J., & Morrison, R. L. (2001). School expulsion as a process and an event: Before and after effects on children at risk for school discipline. *New directions for youth development*, *2001*(92), 45-71.

Morse, J. M., & Field, P. A. (1995). Qualitative research methods for health professionals (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Morton, R. (2013). Returning Decision to School Discipline Decisions: An Analysis of Recent, Anti-Zero Tolerance Legislation. *Wash. UL Rev.*, *91*, 757.

Mukuria, G. (2002). Disciplinary Challenges How Do Principals Address this Dilemma?. *Urban Education*, *37*(3), 432-452.

Nagy, J., & Danitz, T. (2000). Parental fears heightened by Columbine, poll shows. Retrieved February 12, 2017, from HYPERLINK "http://www.gallup.com/poll/159584/parents-fear-children-safety-school-rises-slightly.aspx" http://www.gallup.com/poll/159584/parents-fear-children-safety-school-rises-slightly.aspx

National Center for Education Statistics (1998). Violence and discipline problems in U.S. public schools: 1996-1997 (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, NCES 98-030, 1998).

National Center for Education Statistics & the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2009). Indicators of school crime and safety: 2008 (NCES 2009-022, NCJ No. 226343). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice.

National Institute of Education (1978). *Violent schools-safe schools*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Nicholson-Crotty, S., Birchmeier, Z., & Valentine, D. (2009). Exploring the impact of school discipline on racial disproportion in the juvenile justice system. *Social Science Quarterly*, *90*(4), 1003-1018.

Noguera, P. (1995). Preventing and producing violence: A critical analysis of responses to school violence. *Harvard Education Review, Vol 65(2),* 25.

Noguera, P. A. (2001). Racial politics and the elusive quest for excellence and equity in education. *Education and Urban Society, 34(1),* 18-41.

Noguera, P. A. (2003). Schools, prisons, and the social implications of punishment: Rethinking disciplinary practices. *Theory into Practice, 42(4), 341-350*

Noguera, P. (2008). What discipline is for: Connecting students to the benefits of learning. Everyday antiracism: Getting real about race in schools, 132-138.

NVIVO (2015). NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis Software; QSR International Pty Ltd. Version 11, 2015.

Ogawa, R. T. (1991). Enchantment, disenchantment, and accommodation: How a faculty made sense of the succession of its principal. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *27*(1), 30-60.

Ornstein, A. C. (1970). Discipline: A major function in teaching the disadvantaged. *Improving College and University Teaching*, *18*(2), 150-152.

Osher, D., Bear, G. G., Sprague, J. R., & Doyle, W. (2010). How can we improve school discipline? *Educational Researcher*, *39*(1), 48-58.

Ospina, S., & Foldy, E. (2009). A critical review of race and ethnicity in the leadership literature: Surfacing context, power and the collective dimensions of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *20*(6), 876-896.

Pane, D. M. (2010). Viewing classroom discipline as negotiable social interaction: A communities of practice perspective. *Teaching and teacher education*, *26*(1), 87-97.

Pane, D. M., Rocco, T. S., Miller, L. D., & Salmon, A. K. (2014). How teachers use power in the classroom to avoid or support exclusionary school discipline practices. *Urban Education, 49*, 297-328.

Paniagua, H., Bond, P., & Thompson, A. (2009). Providing an alternative to zero tolerance policies. *British journal of nursing*, *18*(10).

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage.

Payne, R. S. (1994). The relationship between teachers' beliefs and sense of efficacy and their significance to urban LSES minority students. *Journal of Negro Education, Vol. 63, No. 2*, 181-196.

Pitlick, N. E. (2015). Alternatives to Zero Tolerance Policies Affecting Minority students: A Systematic Review.

Pitsch, T. L. (2016). *Disciplinary inequity: exploring perceptions of discretionary student removal among assistant principals in Texas* (Doctoral dissertation).

Public Agenda Foundation. (2004). *Teaching interrupted: Do discipline policies in today's public schools foster the common good?*. Public Agenda.

Raffaele-Mendez, L. M., & Knoff, H. M. (2003). Who gets suspended from school and why: A demographic analysis of schools and disciplinary infractions in a large school district. *Education & Treatment of Children, 26*, 30-51.

Raffaele-Mendez, L. M., Knoff, H. M., & Ferron, J. M. (n.d.). School demographic variables and out-of-school suspension rates: A quantitative and qualitative analysis of a large, ethnically diverse school district. *Psychology in the Schools, 39*, 259-277.

Rausch, M. K., & Skiba, R. J. (2005). *The academic cost of discipline: The contribution of school discipline to achievement.* Annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Quebec.

Raywid, M. A. (1995). Alternative schools: The state of the art. *Educational Leadership, 52(1),* 26-31.

Renihan, F. I., & Renihan, P. J. (1995). Responsive high schools: Structuring success for the at-risk student. *The High School Journal, 79(1),* 1-13.

Reyes, A. H. (2006). *Discipline, achievement, & race: Is zero tolerance the answer?* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishing.

Romi, S., & Freund, M. (1999). Teachers', students' and parents' attitudes towards disruptive behaviour problems in high school: A case study. *Educational Psychology, 19*(1), 53-70.

Rothman, D. J. (1971). *The discovery of the asylum.* Boston, MA: Little Brown Publishers.

Saad, L. (1999, April 23). Public views Littleton tragedy as sign of deeper problems in country. Retrieved February 12, 2017, from HYPERLINK "http://www.gallup.com/poll/3898/public-views-littleton-tragedy-sign-deeper-problems-country.aspx" http://www.gallup.com/poll/3898/public-views-littleton-tragedy-sign-deeper-problems-country.aspx

Salazar, M. J. (2013). *How current school leaders make sense of inclusive education policies: a qualitative exploration of graduates of a "high-quality" principal preparation program* (Doctoral dissertation).

Saltrick, S. (2010). *Making Sense of Accountability: A Qualitative Exploration of How Eight New York City High School Principals Negotiate the Complexity of Today's Accountability Landscape*. Columbia University.

Schechter, C., Shaked, H., Ganon-Shilon, S., & Goldratt, M. (2016). Leadership Metaphors: School Principals' Sense-Making of a National Reform. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 1-26.

Schein, E. H. (2009). *The corporate culture survival guide* (Vol. 158). John Wiley & Sons.

Simon, M. K., & Goes, J. (2013). *Ex post facto research.* Retrieved July 15, 2016, from http://www.dissertationrecipes.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Ex-Post-Facto-research.pdf

Skerrett, A. (2008). "Going the race way": Biographical influences on multicultural and antiracist English curriculum practices. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *24*(7), 1813-1826.Sokolowski, R. (2000). Introduction to phenomenology. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Skiba, R. J. (2000a). Zero tolerance, zero evidence. *An analysis of school disciplinary practice (Policy Research Report SRS2): Indiana Education Policy Center*.

Skiba, R. J. (2000b). When is disproportionality discrimination? The overrepresentation of Black students in school suspension. In W. Ayers, B. Dorhn, & R. Ayers, *Zero tolerance: Resisting the drive for punishment in our schools*, p. 23. NewYork, NY: The New Press.

Skiba, R. J., Chung, C. G., Trachok, M., Baker, T. L., Sheya, A., & Hughes, R. L. (2014). Parsing disciplinary disproportionality: Contributions of infraction, student, and school characteristics to out-of-school suspension and expulsion. *American Educational Research Journal*, *51*(4), 640-670.

Skiba, R., & Edl, H. (2004). The Disciplinary Practices Survey: How Do Indiana's Principals Feel about Discipline. Children Left Behind Policy Briefs. Supplementary Analysis 2-C. *Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, Indiana University*.

Skiba, R., Edl, H., & Rausch, M. (2007). How do principals feel about discipline? The Disciplinary Practices Survey. In *Annual Convention of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL*.

Skiba, R. J., Horner, R. H., Chung, C. G., Rausch, M. K., May, S. L., & Tobin, T. (2011). Race is not neutral: A national investigation of African American and Latino disproportionality in school discipline. *School Psychology Review*, *40*(1), 85.

Skiba, R. J., & Knesting, K. (2001). Zero tolerance, zero evidence: An analysis of school disciplinary practice. *New directions for youth development, 2001(92)*, 17-43.

Skiba, R. J., Knesting, K., & Bush, L. D. (2002). Culturally competent assessment: More than nonbiased tests. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 11(1)*, 61-78.

Skiba, R. J., & Losen, D. J. (2016). From reaction to prevention: Turning the page on school discipline. *American Educator, 39(4)*, 4.

Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., & Nardo, A. C. (2000). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *Policy Research Report No SR51*. Indiana University Bloomington: Center for Evaluation & Education Policy.

Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., Nardo, A. C., & Peterson, R. L. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *The Urban Review, 34(4),* 317-342.

Skiba, R., & Peterson, R. L. (1999). The dark side of zero tolerance: Can punishment lead to safe schools? *The Phi Delta Kappan, 80(5),* 372-382.

Skiba, R. J., & Peterson, R. L. (2000). School discipline at a crossroads: From zero tolerance to early response. *Exceptional Children, 66(3),* 335-346.

Skiba, R. J., & Rausch, M. K. (2006). Zero tolerance, suspension, and expulsion: Questions of equity and effectiveness. Handbook of classroom management. *Research, Practice, And Contemporary Issues*, 1063-1089.

Smolkowski, K., Girvan, E. J., McIntosh, K., Nese, R. N., & Horner, R. H. (2016). Vulnerable decision points for disproportionate office discipline referrals: Comparisons of discipline for African American and White elementary school students. *Behavioral Disorders, 41*(4), 178-195.

Sokolowski, R. (2000). *Introduction to phenomenology*. Cambridge University Press.

Solorzano, D. G., & Ornelas, A. (2002). A critical race analysis of advanced placement classes: A case of educational inequality. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, *1*(4), 215-229.

Solorzano, D. G., & Ornelas, A. (2004). A critical race analysis of Latina/o and African American advanced placement enrollment in public high schools. *The High School Journal*, *87*(3), 15-26.

Spillane, J. P., Reiser, B. J., & Reimer, T. (2002). Policy implementation and cognition: Reframing and refocusing implementation research. Review of Educational Research, 72(3), 387-431.

Starks, H., & Brown Trinidad, S. (2007). Choose your method: A comparison of phenomenology, discourse analysis, and grounded theory. *Qualitative Health Research, 17(10),* 1372-1380.

Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (2002). The evolution of discipline practices: School-wide positive behavior supports. *Child and Family Behavior Therapy, 24(1-2),* 23-50.

Tajalli, H., & Garba, H. A. (2014). Discipline or prejudice? Overrepresentation of minority students in Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs. *Urban Review 46,* 620-631.

Texas Appleseed (2007). *Texas' school-to-prison pipeline: Dropout to incarceration: The impact of school discipline and zero tolerance.*

Texas Appleseed (2009). *When My Child is Disciplined at School: A guide for families.*

Texas Education Agency (2007). *Policy Research - Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs.* Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency.

Texas Education Agency (2016). *Chapter 37, Discipline Decisions.* Texas Education Agency. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.37.htm#37.001

Texas Education Agency (2016, August 20). *Discipline Data Products*. Discipline Reports. Retrieved from http://tea.texas.gov/Reports_and_Data/Student_Data/Discipline_Data_Products/Discipline_Data_Products_Overview/

Texas Education Agency (2016, June 21). *Student Enrollment Report*. PEIMS Standard Reports Overview. Retrieved from https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/adhocrpt/adste.html

Texas Education Code. (2016). Chapter 37: Discipline; Law and Order. Subchapter A. Alternative Settings for Behavior Management. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from HYPERLINK "http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.37.htm" http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.37.htm

Texas Education Code. (2016). Chapter 4: Public education mission, objectives, and goals. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from HYPERLINK "http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.4.htm" http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.4.htm

Thomas, S. P., & Pollio, H. R. (2002). Listening to patients: A phenomenological approach to
nursing research and practice. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Thornberg, R. (2008). 'It's not fair!': Voicing pupils' criticisms of school rules. *Children & Society*, *22*(6), 418-428.

Thusi, G. (2011). Deconstructing the marginalization of 'underclass' students: Disciplinary alternative education. *University of Toledo Law Review, 42*, 429-465.

Toldson, I. A., McGee, T., & Lemmons, B. P. (2013). Reducing suspension among academically disengaged Black males.

Townsend, B. L. (2000). The disproportionate discipline of African American learners: Reducing school suspensions and expulsions. *Exceptional Children*, *66*(3), 381-391.

Trochim, W. M. (2006). Qualitative measures. Research Measures Knowledge Base, 361-943.

Tyack, D. B. (1974). *The one best system: A history of American urban education (Vol. 95).* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Umbreit, M. S., & Armour, M. P. (2011). Restorative justice and dialogue: Impact, opportunities, and challenges in the global community. *Wash. UJL & Pol'y*, *36*, 65.

United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division and the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (2014). Dear colleague letter:

Nondisciminartory administration of school discipline. Accessed at: HYPERLINK "http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/edu/documents/dcl.pdf" *http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/edu/documents/dcl.pdf*

United States Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (1974). LEAA, 1973: LEAA activities July 1, 1972, to June 30, 1973. United States.

van Manen, M. (1984). "Doing" phenomenological research and writing: An introduction. Monograph No. 7. University of Alberta. Department of Secondary education. Curriculum. Praxis monograph series, pp. 1-29.

van Manen, M. (1990). Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Verdugo, R. R. (2002). Race-ethnicity, social class, and zero-tolerance policies: The cultural and structural wars. *Education and urban society*, *35*(1), 50-75.

Vincent, C. G., Tobin, T. J., Hawken, L. S., & Frank, J. L. (2012). Discipline referrals and access to secondary level support in elementary and middle schools: Patterns across African-American, Hispanic-American, and White students. *Education and Treatment of Children*, *35*(3), 431-458.

Way, S. M. (2011). School discipline and disruptive classroom behavior: The moderating effects of student perceptions. *The Sociological Quarterly, 52(3),* 346-375.

Weick, K.E. (1995), Sensemaking in Organizations, Vol. 3, Sage Publications, Incorporated, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the process of sensemaking. *Organization Science, 16*(4), 409-421.

Wertz, F. J. (2005). Phenomenological research methods for counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *52*(2), 167.

Willis, J.W. (2007). Foundations of qualitative research. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Wilson, M. G. (2013). Disrupting the Pipeline: The Role of School Leadership in Mitigating Exclusion and. *Journal of Special Education Leadership*, *26*, 2.

Wright, A. C. (2015). Teachers' perceptions of students' disruptive behavior: the effect of racial congruence and consequences for school suspension. *Work. Pap., Dep. Econ., Univ. Calif., Santa Barbara. http://www. econ. ucsb. edu/about_us/events/seminar_papers/Wright. pdf*.

Yanow, D. (1996). How does a policy mean? Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Zirkel, P. A. (1998). The right stuff. *Phi Delta Kappan, 79(6)*, 475-476.